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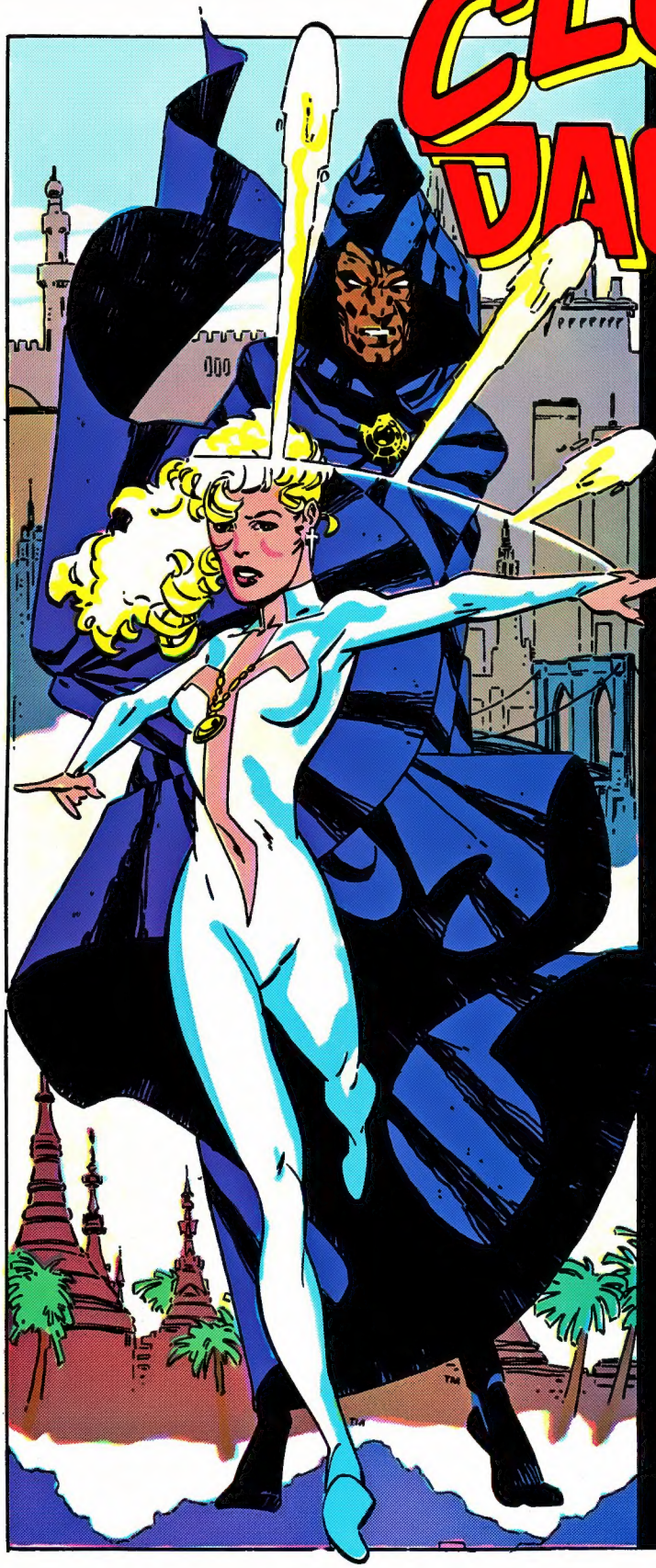

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STAN LEE PRESENTS...

INTO THE ABYSS

ONCE UPON A TIME-- WHEN **CHARLES XAVIER'S** WORLD WAS NEW AND FULL OF INFINITELY JOYOUS PROMISE, **MOIRA MacTAGGERT** WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN HIS LIFE.

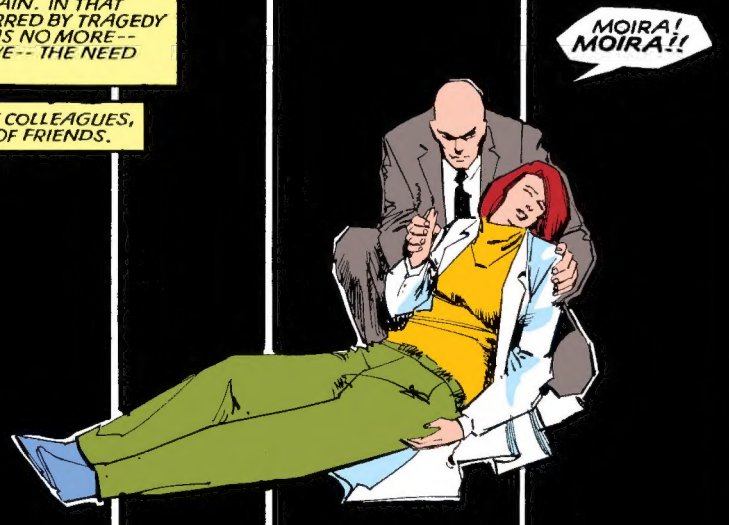
THEY WERE YOUNG AND SO VERY MUCH IN LOVE.

THEN HE WENT AWAY TO WAR AND SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAPPENED TO HER AND IT WAS TEN YEARS BEFORE HE SAW HER AGAIN. IN THAT INTERIM, BOTH HAD BEEN SCARRED BY TRAGEDY AND WHILE THEIR PASSION WAS NO MORE-- THEY WERE NO LONGER IN LOVE-- THE NEED WAS JUST AS GREAT.

SO, THEY BECAME FIRST COLLEAGUES, AND THEN THE TRUEST OF FRIENDS.

NOW, HOLDING HER IN HIS ARMS, TRYING TO FIND A PULSE, PROBING DESPERATELY INTO HER MIND FOR THE SLIGHTEST THOUGHT, XAVIER FEARS HE'S LOST HER FOREVER...

... AND FEELS AS IF SOMEONE HAS TORN OUT HIS HEART.



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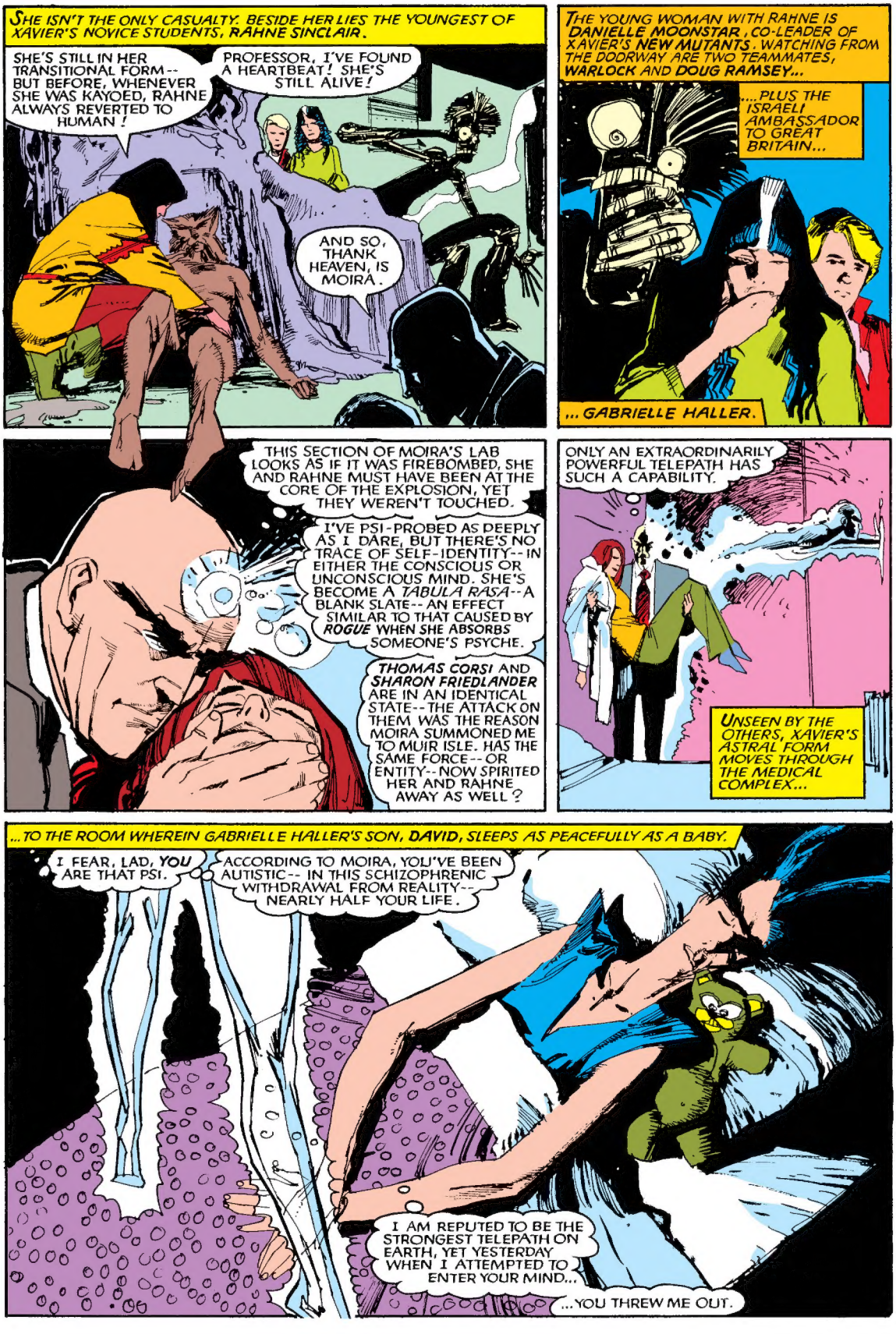
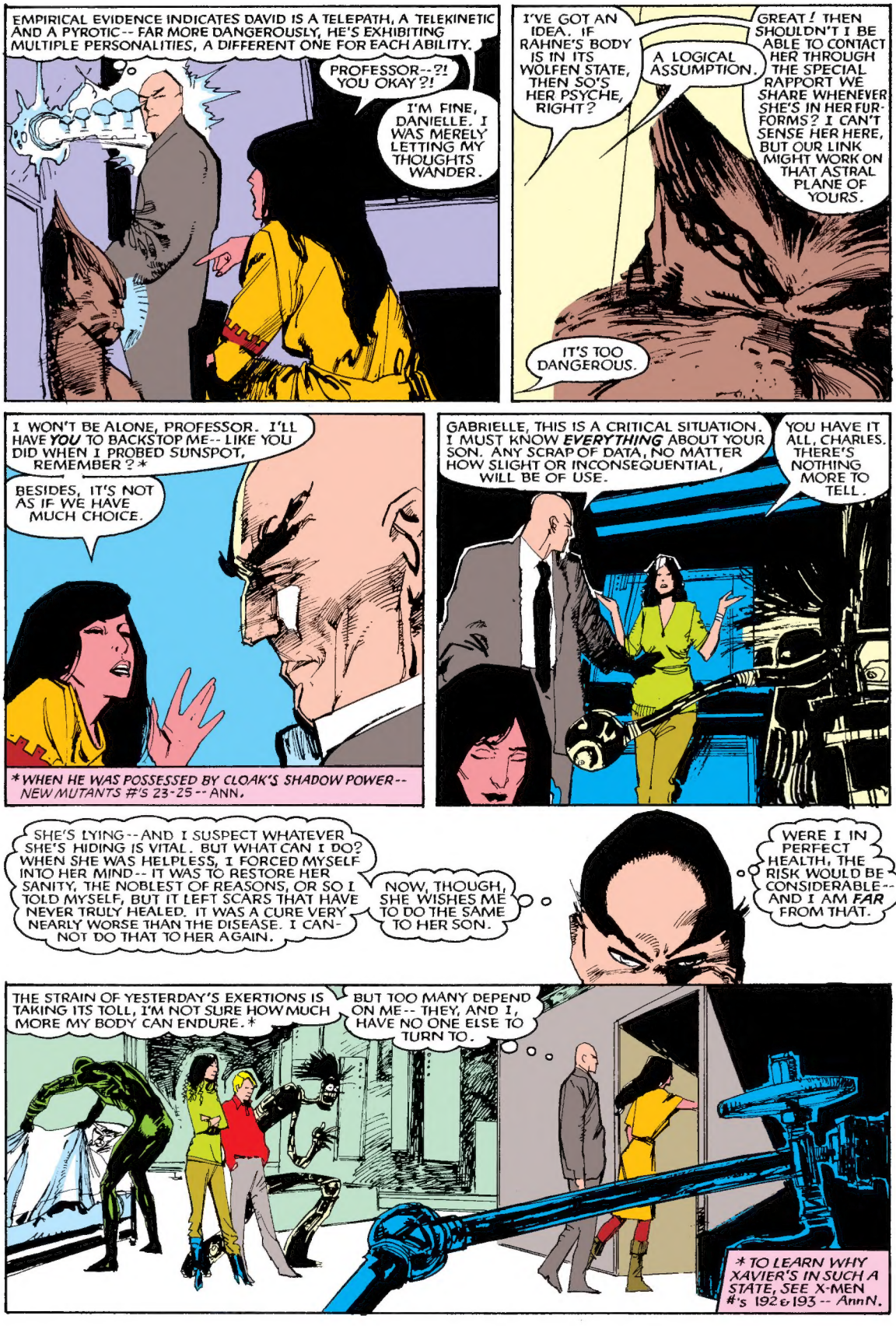
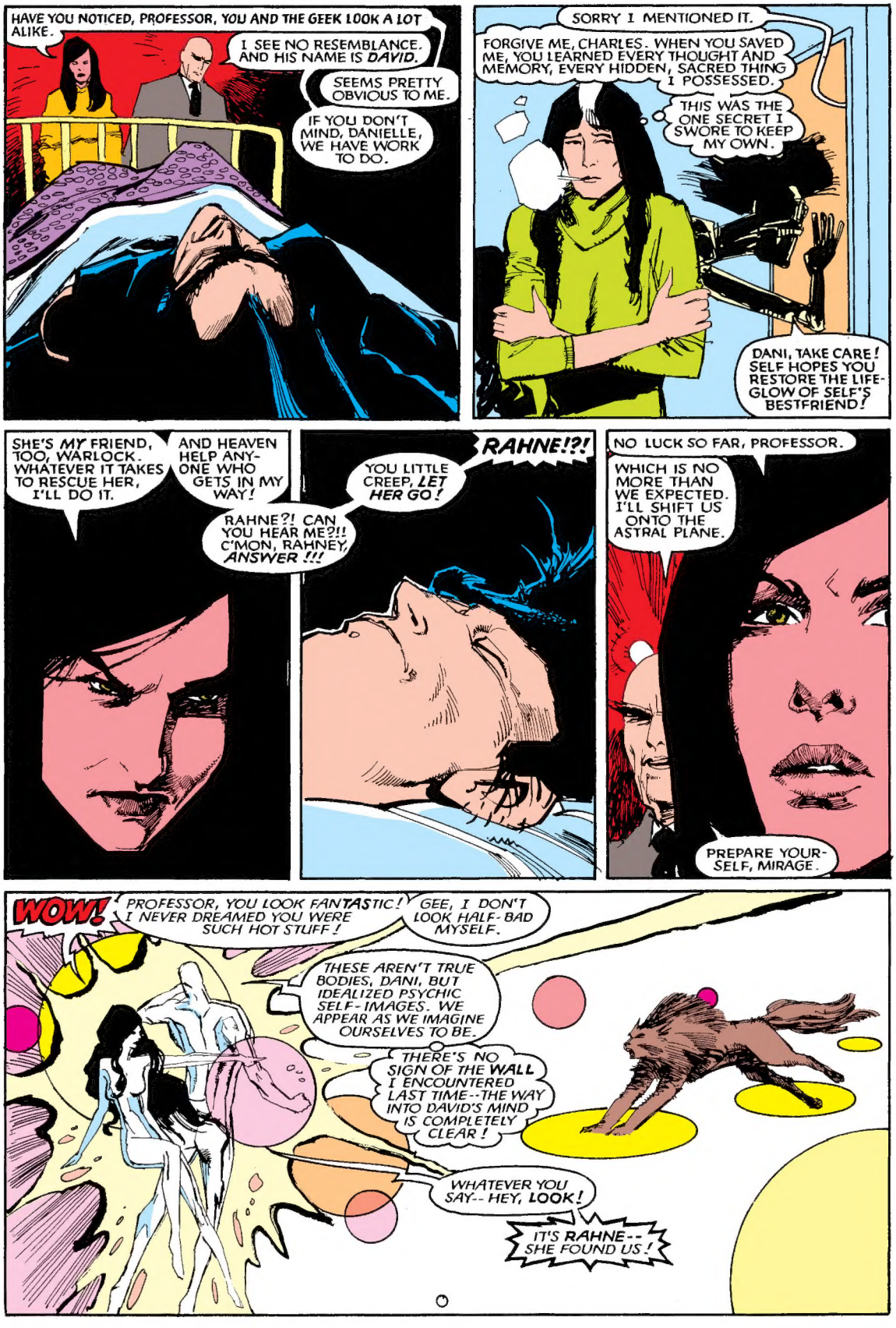

SHE ISN'T THE ONLY CASUALTY. BESIDE HER LIES THE YOUNGEST OF XAVIER'S NOVICE STUDENTS, RAHNE SINCLAIR.
SHE'S STILL IN HER TRANSITIONAL FORM -- BUT BEFORE, WHENEVER SHE WAS KAYOED, RAHNE ALWAYS REVERTED TO HUMAN!
PROFESSOR, I'VE FOUND A HEARTBEAT! SHE'S STILL ALIVE!
AND SO, THANK HEAVEN, IS MOIRA.
THE YOUNG WOMAN WITH RAHNE IS DANIELLE MOONSTAR, CO-LEADER OF XAVIER'S NEW MUTANTS. WATCHING FROM THE DOORWAY ARE TWO TEAMMATES, WARLOCK AND DOUG RAMSEY...
...PLUS THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO GREAT BRITAIN...
...GABRIELLE HALLER.
THIS SECTION OF MOIRA'S LAB LOOKS AS IF IT WAS FIREBOMBED, SHE AND RAHNE MUST HAVE BEEN AT THE CORE OF THE EXPLOSION, YET THEY WEREN'T TOUCHED.
I'VE PSI-PROBED AS DEEPLY AS I DARE, BUT THERE'S NO TRACE OF SELF-IDENTITY -- IN EITHER THE CONSCIOUS OR UNCONSCIOUS MIND. SHE'S BECOME A TABULA RASA -- A BLANK SLATE -- AN EFFECT SIMILAR TO THAT CAUSED BY ROGUE WHEN SHE ABSORBS SOMEONE'S PSYCHE.
THOMAS CORSI AND SHARON FRIEDLANDER ARE IN AN IDENTICAL STATE -- THE ATTACK ON THEM WAS THE REASON MOIRA SUMMONED ME TO MUIR ISLE. HAS THE SAME FORCE -- OR ENTITY -- NOW SPIRITED HER AND RAHNE AWAY AS WELL?
ONLY AN EXTRAORDINARILY POWERFUL TELEPATH HAS SUCH A CAPABILITY.
UNSEEN BY THE OTHERS, XAVIER'S ASTRAL FORM MOVES THROUGH THE MEDICAL COMPLEX...
...TO THE ROOM WHEREIN GABRIELLE HALLER'S SON, DAVID, SLEEPS AS PEACEFULLY AS A BABY.
I FEAR, LAD, YOU ARE THAT PSI.
ACCORDING TO MOIRA, YOU'VE BEEN AUTISTIC -- IN THIS SCHIZOPHRENIC WITHDRAWAL FROM REALITY -- NEARLY HALF YOUR LIFE.
I AM REPUTED TO BE THE STRONGEST TELEPATH ON EARTH, YET YESTERDAY WHEN I ATTEMPTED TO ENTER YOUR MIND...
...YOU THREW ME OUT.


EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE INDICATES DAVID IS A TELEPATH, A TELEKINETIC AND A PYROTIC -- FAR MORE DANGEROUSLY, HE'S EXHIBITING MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES, A DIFFERENT ONE FOR EACH ABILITY.
PROFESSOR--?! YOU OKAY?!
I'M FINE, DANIELLE. I WAS MERELY LETTING MY THOUGHTS WANDER.
I'VE GOT AN IDEA. IF RAHNE'S BODY IS IN ITS WOLFEN STATE, THEN SO'S HER PSYCHE, RIGHT?
A LOGICAL ASSUMPTION.
GREAT! THEN SHOULDN'T I BE ABLE TO CONTACT HER THROUGH THE SPECIAL RAPPORT WE SHARE WHENEVER SHE'S IN HER FUR-FORMS? I CAN'T SENSE HER HERE, BUT OUR LINK MIGHT WORK ON THAT ASTRAL PLANE OF YOURS.
IT'S TOO DANGEROUS.
I WON'T BE ALONE, PROFESSOR. I'LL HAVE YOU TO BACKSTOP ME-- LIKE YOU DID WHEN I PROBED SUNSPOT, REMEMBER?*
BESIDES, IT'S NOT AS IF WE HAVE MUCH CHOICE.
*WHEN HE WAS POSSESSED BY CLOAK'S SHADOW POWER-- NEW MUTANTS #'S 23-25 -- ANN.
GABRIELLE, THIS IS A CRITICAL SITUATION. I MUST KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT YOUR SON. ANY SCRAP OF DATA, NO MATTER HOW SLIGHT OR INCONSEQUENTIAL, WILL BE OF USE.
YOU HAVE IT ALL, CHARLES. THERE'S NOTHING MORE TO TELL.
SHE'S LYING--AND I SUSPECT WHATEVER SHE'S HIDING IS VITAL. BUT WHAT CAN I DO? WHEN SHE WAS HELPLESS, I FORCED MYSELF INTO HER MIND-- IT WAS TO RESTORE HER SANITY, THE NOBLEST OF REASONS, OR SO I TOLD MYSELF, BUT IT LEFT SCARS THAT HAVE NEVER TRULY HEALED. IT WAS A CURE VERY NEARLY WORSE THAN THE DISEASE. I CAN-NOT DO THAT TO HER AGAIN.
NOW, THOUGH, SHE WISHES ME TO DO THE SAME TO HER SON.
WERE I IN PERFECT HEALTH, THE RISK WOULD BE CONSIDERABLE-- AND I AM FAR FROM THAT.
THE STRAIN OF YESTERDAY'S EXERTIONS IS TAKING ITS TOLL, I'M NOT SURE HOW MUCH MORE MY BODY CAN ENDURE.*
BUT TOO MANY DEPEND ON ME-- THEY, AND I, HAVE NO ONE ELSE TO TURN TO.
*TO LEARN WHY XAVIER'S IN SUCH A STATE, SEE X-MEN #'s 192 & 193 -- AnnN.


HAVE YOU NOTICED, PROFESSOR, YOU AND THE GEEK LOOK A LOT ALIKE.
I SEE NO RESEMBLANCE. AND HIS NAME IS DAVID.
SEEMS PRETTY OBVIOUS TO ME.
IF YOU DON'T MIND, DANIELLE, WE HAVE WORK TO DO.
SORRY I MENTIONED IT.
FORGIVE ME, CHARLES. WHEN YOU SAVED ME, YOU LEARNED EVERY THOUGHT AND MEMORY, EVERY HIDDEN, SACRED THING I POSSESSED.
THIS WAS THE ONE SECRET I SWORE TO KEEP MY OWN.
DANI, TAKE CARE! SELF HOPES YOU RESTORE THE LIFE-GLOW OF SELF'S BESTFRIEND!
SHE'S MY FRIEND, TOO, WARLOCK. WHATEVER IT TAKES TO RESCUE HER, I'LL DO IT.
AND HEAVEN HELP ANY-ONE WHO GETS IN MY WAY!
RAHNE?! CAN YOU HEAR ME?!! C'MON, RAHNEY, ANSWER !!!
RAHNE!?!
YOU LITTLE CREEP, LET HER GO!
NO LUCK SO FAR, PROFESSOR.
WHICH IS NO MORE THAN WE EXPECTED. I'LL SHIFT US ONTO THE ASTRAL PLANE.
PREPARE YOUR-SELF, MIRAGE.
WOW!
PROFESSOR, YOU LOOK FANTASTIC! I NEVER DREAMED YOU WERE SUCH HOT STUFF!
GEE, I DON'T LOOK HALF-BAD MYSELF.
THESE AREN'T TRUE BODIES, DANI, BUT IDEALIZED PSYCHIC SELF-IMAGES. WE APPEAR AS WE IMAGINE OURSELVES TO BE.
THERE'S NO SIGN OF THE WALL I ENCOUNTERED LAST TIME--THE WAY INTO DAVID'S MIND IS COMPLETELY CLEAR!
WHATEVER YOU SAY-- HEY, LOOK!
IT'S RAHNE-- SHE FOUND US!

HOW MANY BRIGHT OREO® COOKIE IDEAS CAN YOU COME UP WITH?

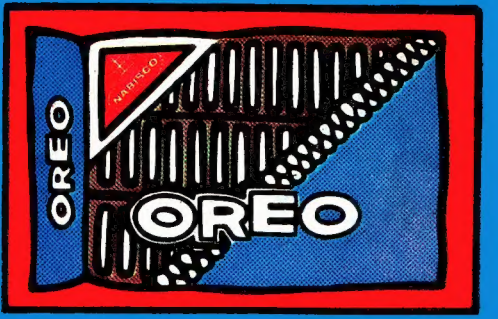
GO AROUND THE OREO® COOKIE CLOCKWISE. START WITH THE CIRCLED LETTER "U". WRITE DOWN EVERY THIRD LETTER ON THE DOTTED LINES. FIVE TIMES AROUND THE OREO® SHOULD GIVE YOU 6 BRIGHT IDEAS FOR ENJOYING THE ONE AND ONLY CREAMY, CRUNCHY, CHOCOLATE COOKIE SENSATION.

START

U K C N M H S U D C W U R C N E H K W C E L R A I U T C N

1. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ IT!
2. _ _ _ _ IT!
3. _ _ _ _ _ IT!
4. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ IT!
5. _ _ _ _ IT!
6. _ _ _ IT!

1. UNSCREW
2. LICK
3. MUNCH
4. CRUNCH
5. DUNK
6. EAT



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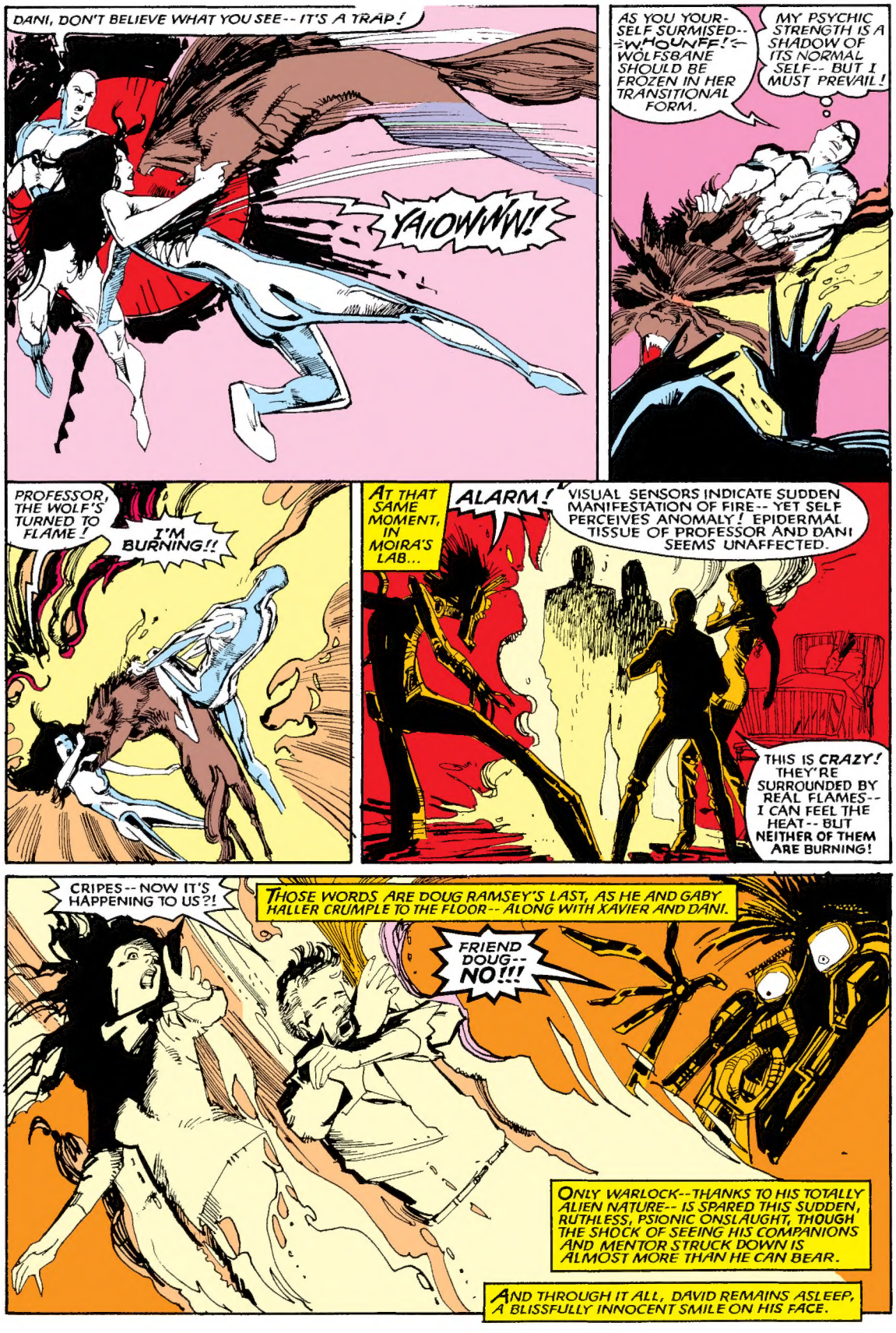
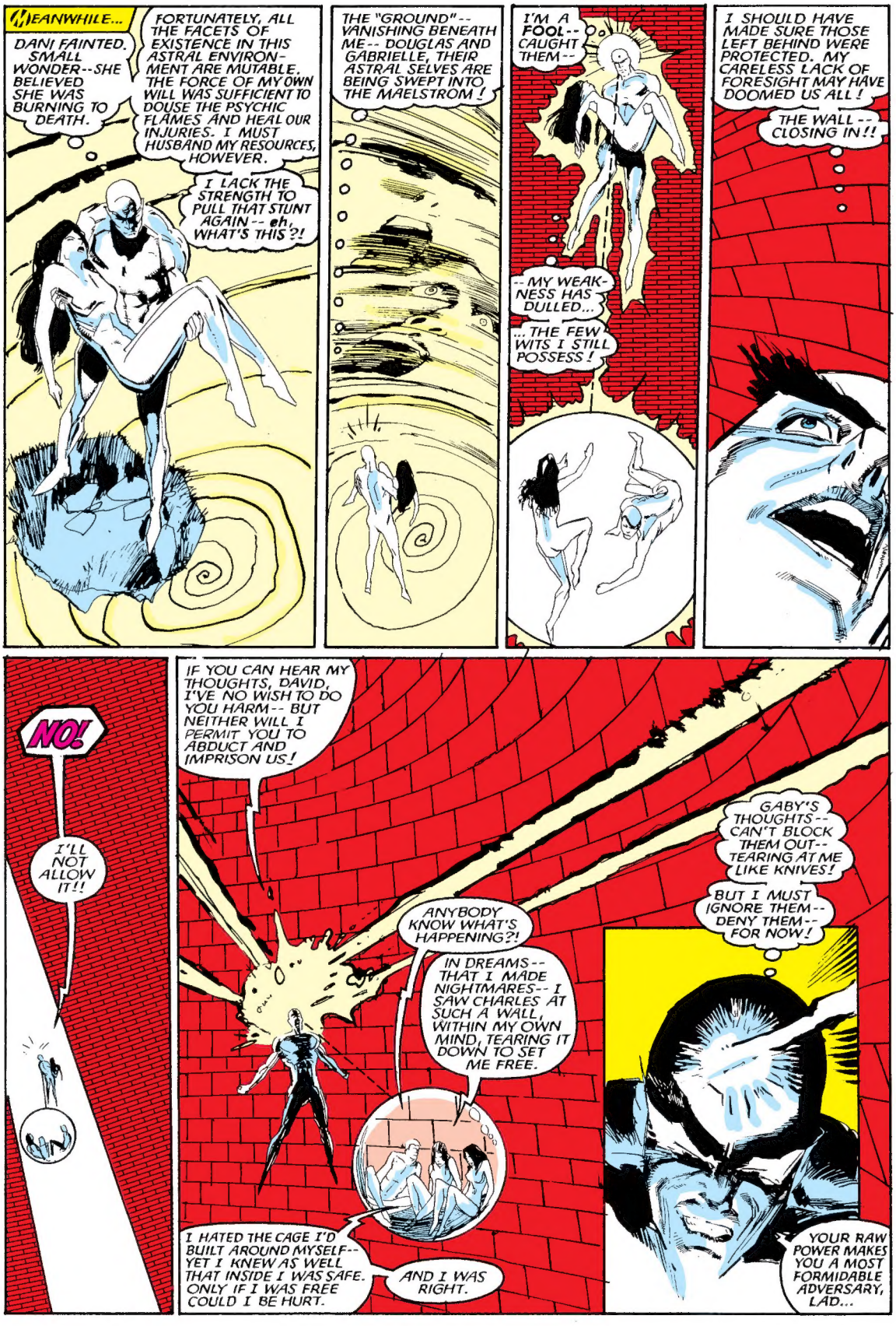
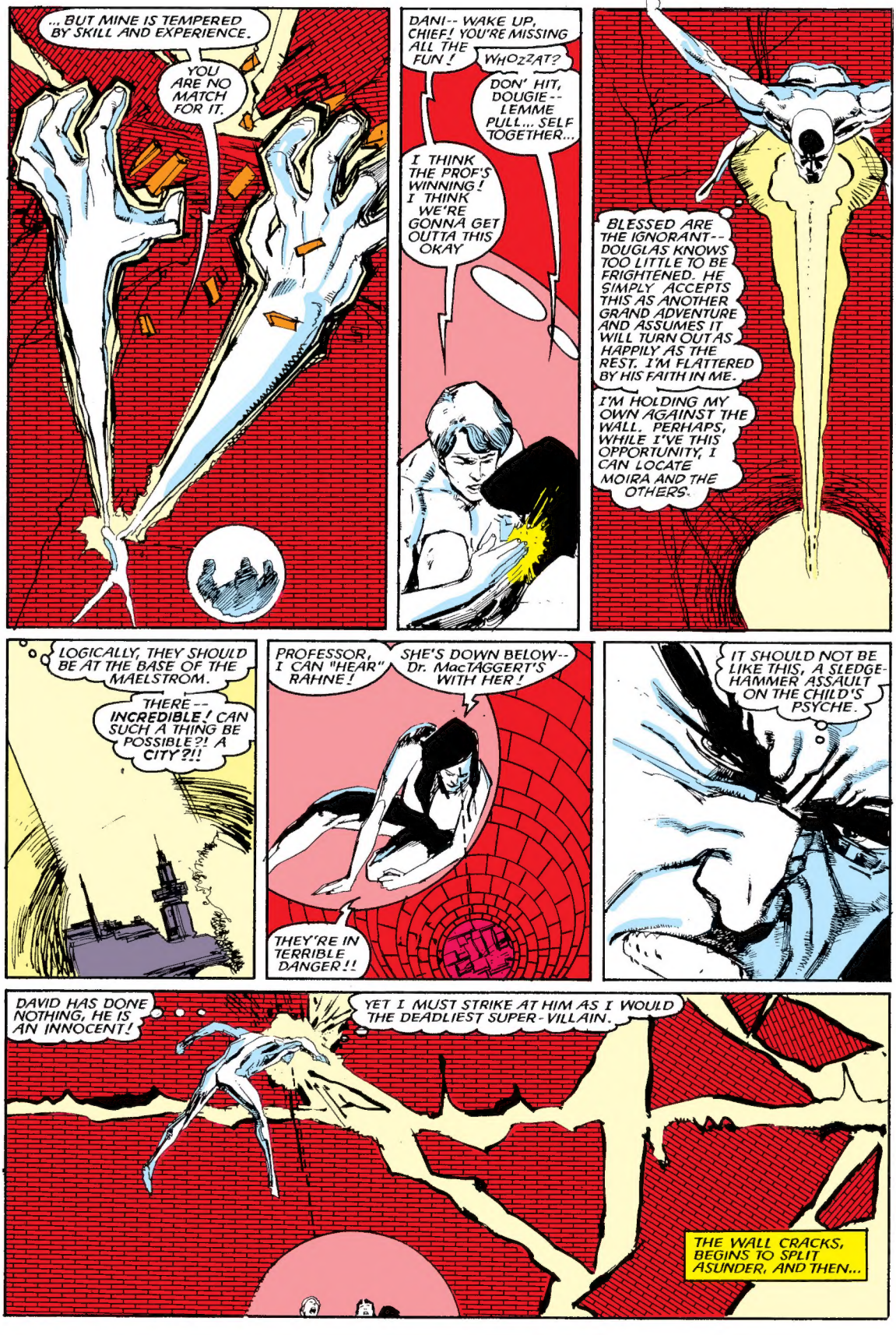
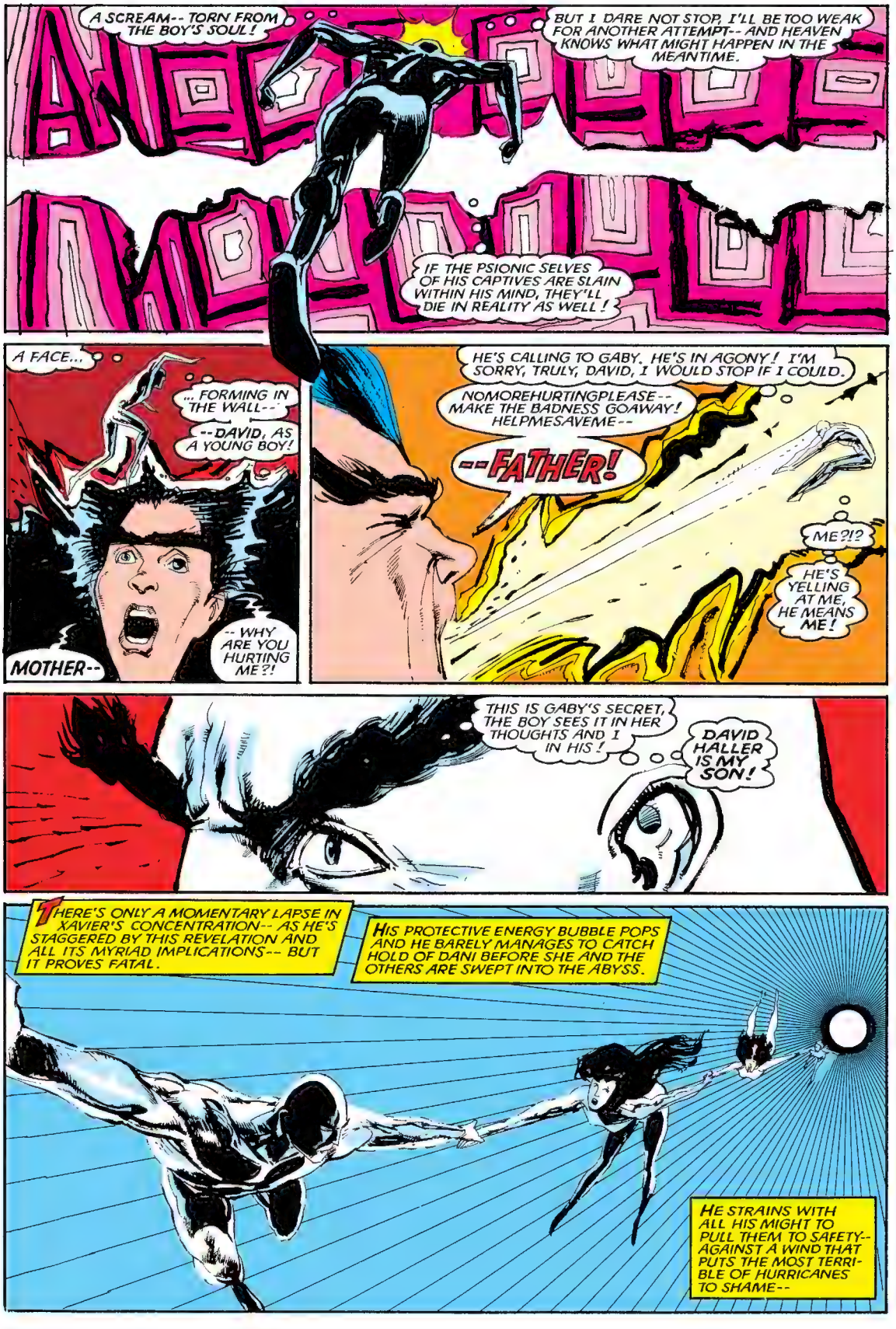

DANI, DON'T BELIEVE WHAT YOU SEE-- IT'S A TRAP!
YAIOWWW!
AS YOU YOURSELF SURMISED-- WHOUNFF! WOLFSBANE SHOULD BE FROZEN IN HER TRANSITIONAL FORM.
MY PSYCHIC STRENGTH IS A SHADOW OF ITS NORMAL SELF-- BUT I MUST PREVAIL!
PROFESSOR, THE WOLF'S TURNED TO FLAME!
I'M BURNING!!
AT THAT SAME MOMENT, IN MOIRA'S LAB...
ALARM!
VISUAL SENSORS INDICATE SUDDEN MANIFESTATION OF FIRE-- YET SELF PERCEIVES ANOMALY! EPIDERMAL TISSUE OF PROFESSOR AND DANI SEEMS UNAFFECTED.
THIS IS CRAZY! THEY'RE SURROUNDED BY REAL FLAMES-- I CAN FEEL THE HEAT-- BUT NEITHER OF THEM ARE BURNING!
CRIPES-- NOW IT'S HAPPENING TO US?!
THOSE WORDS ARE DOUG RAMSEY'S LAST, AS HE AND GABY HALLER CRUMPLE TO THE FLOOR-- ALONG WITH XAVIER AND DANI.
FRIEND DOUG-- NO!!!
ONLY WARLOCK--THANKS TO HIS TOTALLY ALIEN NATURE-- IS SPARED THIS SUDDEN, RUTHLESS, PSIONIC ONSLAUGHT, THOUGH THE SHOCK OF SEEING HIS COMPANIONS AND MENTOR STRUCK DOWN IS ALMOST MORE THAN HE CAN BEAR.
AND THROUGH IT ALL, DAVID REMAINS ASLEEP, A BLISSFULLY INNOCENT SMILE ON HIS FACE.


MEANWHILE...
DANI FAINTED. SMALL WONDER--SHE BELIEVED SHE WAS BURNING TO DEATH.
FORTUNATELY, ALL THE FACETS OF EXISTENCE IN THIS ASTRAL ENVIRONMENT ARE MUTABLE. THE FORCE OF MY OWN WILL WAS SUFFICIENT TO DOUSE THE PSYCHIC FLAMES AND HEAL OUR INJURIES. I MUST HUSBAND MY RESOURCES, HOWEVER.
I LACK THE STRENGTH TO PULL THAT STUNT AGAIN -- eh, WHAT'S THIS?!
THE "GROUND" -- VANISHING BENEATH ME -- DOUGLAS AND GABRIELLE, THEIR ASTRAL SELVES ARE BEING SWEPT INTO THE MAELSTROM!
I'M A FOOL -- CAUGHT THEM --
-- MY WEAKNESS HAS DULLED...
... THE FEW WITS I STILL POSSESS!
I SHOULD HAVE MADE SURE THOSE LEFT BEHIND WERE PROTECTED. MY CARELESS LACK OF FORESIGHT MAY HAVE DOOMED US ALL!
THE WALL -- CLOSING IN!!
NO!
I'LL NOT ALLOW IT!!
IF YOU CAN HEAR MY THOUGHTS, DAVID, I'VE NO WISH TO DO YOU HARM -- BUT NEITHER WILL I PERMIT YOU TO ABDUCT AND IMPRISON US!
ANYBODY KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING?!
IN DREAMS -- THAT I MADE NIGHTMARES -- I SAW CHARLES AT SUCH A WALL, WITHIN MY OWN MIND, TEARING IT DOWN TO SET ME FREE.
I HATED THE CAGE I'D BUILT AROUND MYSELF -- YET I KNEW AS WELL THAT INSIDE I WAS SAFE. ONLY IF I WAS FREE COULD I BE HURT.
AND I WAS RIGHT.
GABY'S THOUGHTS -- CAN'T BLOCK THEM OUT -- TEARING AT ME LIKE KNIVES!
BUT I MUST IGNORE THEM -- DENY THEM -- FOR NOW!
YOUR RAW POWER MAKES YOU A MOST FORMIDABLE ADVERSARY, LAD...


... BUT MINE IS TEMPERED BY SKILL AND EXPERIENCE.
YOU ARE NO MATCH FOR IT.
DANI-- WAKE UP, CHIEF! YOU'RE MISSING ALL THE FUN!
WHOZZAT?
DON' HIT, DOUGIE-- LEMME PULL... SELF TOGETHER...
I THINK THE PROF'S WINNING! I THINK WE'RE GONNA GET OUTTA THIS OKAY
BLESSED ARE THE IGNORANT-- DOUGLAS KNOWS TOO LITTLE TO BE FRIGHTENED. HE SIMPLY ACCEPTS THIS AS ANOTHER GRAND ADVENTURE AND ASSUMES IT WILL TURN OUT AS HAPPILY AS THE REST. I'M FLATTERED BY HIS FAITH IN ME.
I'M HOLDING MY OWN AGAINST THE WALL. PERHAPS, WHILE I'VE THIS OPPORTUNITY, I CAN LOCATE MOIRA AND THE OTHERS.
LOGICALLY, THEY SHOULD BE AT THE BASE OF THE MAELSTROM.
THERE-- INCREDIBLE! CAN SUCH A THING BE POSSIBLE?! A CITY?!!
PROFESSOR, I CAN "HEAR" RAHNE!
SHE'S DOWN BELOW-- Dr. MacTAGGERT'S WITH HER!
THEY'RE IN TERRIBLE DANGER!!
IT SHOULD NOT BE LIKE THIS, A SLEDGE-HAMMER ASSAULT ON THE CHILD'S PSYCHE.
DAVID HAS DONE NOTHING, HE IS AN INNOCENT!
YET I MUST STRIKE AT HIM AS I WOULD THE DEADLIEST SUPER-VILLAIN.
THE WALL CRACKS, BEGINS TO SPLIT ASUNDER, AND THEN...


A SCREAM-- TORN FROM THE BOY'S SOUL!
BUT I DARE NOT STOP. I'LL BE TOO WEAK FOR ANOTHER ATTEMPT-- AND HEAVEN KNOWS WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN IN THE MEANTIME.
IF THE PSIONIC SELVES OF HIS CAPTIVES ARE SLAIN WITHIN HIS MIND, THEY'LL DIE IN REALITY AS WELL!
A FACE...
... FORMING IN THE WALL--
--DAVID, AS A YOUNG BOY!
MOTHER--
-- WHY ARE YOU HURTING ME?!
HE'S CALLING TO GABY. HE'S IN AGONY! I'M SORRY, TRULY, DAVID, I WOULD STOP IF I COULD.
NOMOREHURTINGPLEASE-- MAKE THE BADNESS GOAWAY! HELPMESAVEME--
--FATHER!
ME?!?
HE'S YELLING AT ME, HE MEANS ME!
THIS IS GABY'S SECRET, THE BOY SEES IT IN HER THOUGHTS AND I IN HIS!
DAVID HALLER IS MY SON!
THERE'S ONLY A MOMENTARY LAPSE IN XAVIER'S CONCENTRATION-- AS HE'S STAGGERED BY THIS REVELATION AND ALL ITS MYRIAD IMPLICATIONS-- BUT IT PROVES FATAL.
HIS PROTECTIVE ENERGY BUBBLE POPS AND HE BARELY MANAGES TO CATCH HOLD OF DANI BEFORE SHE AND THE OTHERS ARE SWEPT INTO THE ABYSS.
HE STRAINS WITH ALL HIS MIGHT TO PULL THEM TO SAFETY-- AGAINST A WIND THAT PUTS THE MOST TERRIBLE OF HURRICANES TO SHAME--

"Etagramulfabetz"

(THE TASTE THAT'S OUT OF THIS WORLD.)

"Reese's Pieces" are the only words he knows in our language, but he's working on "great peanut butter taste."

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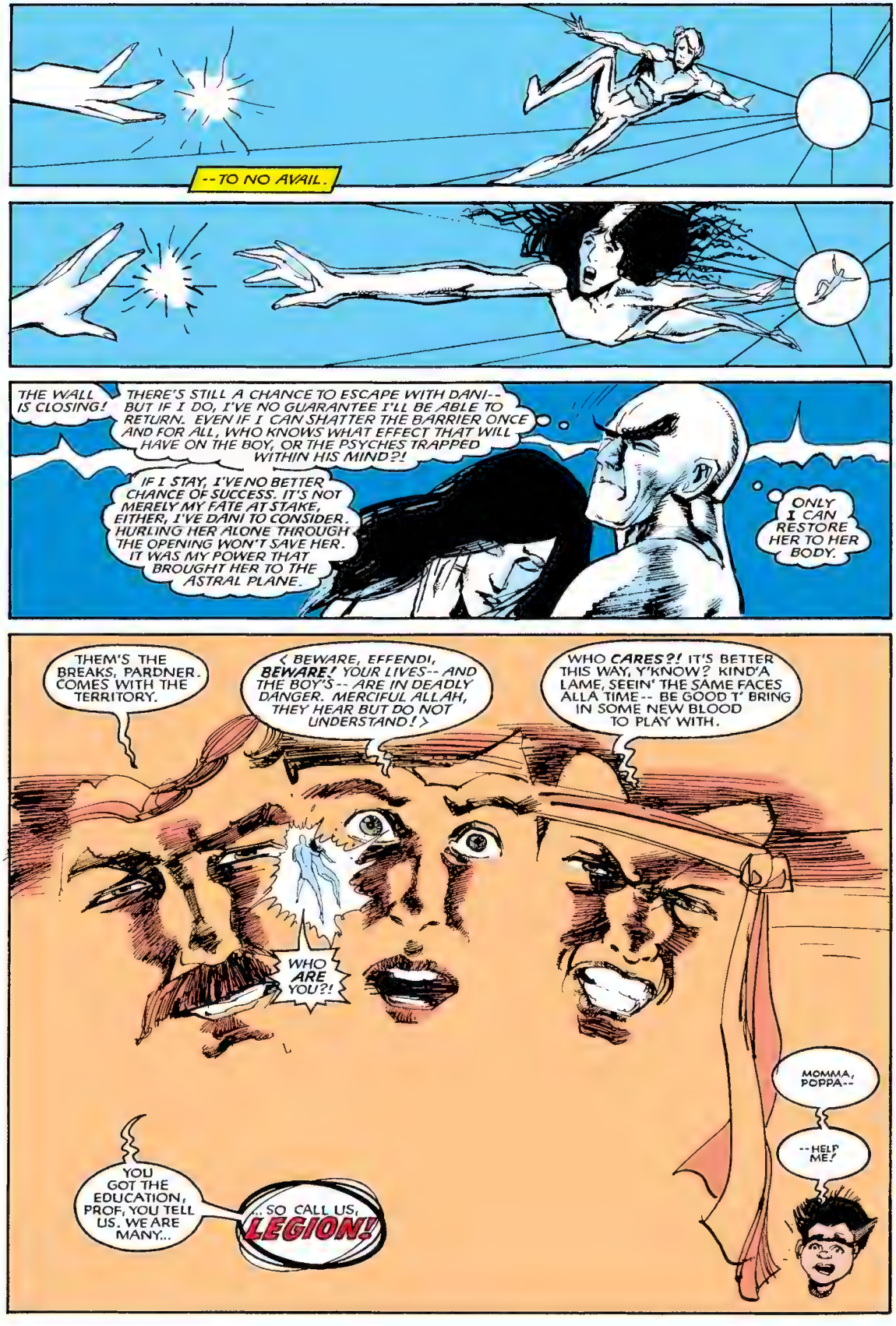
--TO NO AVAIL.
THE WALL IS CLOSING!
THERE'S STILL A CHANCE TO ESCAPE WITH DANI-- BUT IF I DO, I'VE NO GUARANTEE I'LL BE ABLE TO RETURN. EVEN IF I CAN SHATTER THE BARRIER ONCE AND FOR ALL, WHO KNOWS WHAT EFFECT THAT WILL HAVE ON THE BOY, OR THE PSYCHES TRAPPED WITHIN HIS MIND?!
IF I STAY, I'VE NO BETTER CHANCE OF SUCCESS. IT'S NOT MERELY MY FATE AT STAKE, EITHER, I'VE DANI TO CONSIDER. HURLING HER ALONE THROUGH THE OPENING WON'T SAVE HER. IT WAS MY POWER THAT BROUGHT HER TO THE ASTRAL PLANE.
ONLY I CAN RESTORE HER TO HER BODY.
THEM'S THE BREAKS, PARDNER. COMES WITH THE TERRITORY.
< BEWARE, EFFENDI, BEWARE! YOUR LIVES-- AND THE BOY'S-- ARE IN DEADLY DANGER. MERCIFUL ALLAH, THEY HEAR BUT DO NOT UNDERSTAND! >
WHO CARES?! IT'S BETTER THIS WAY, Y'KNOW? KIND'A LAME, SEEIN' THE SAME FACES ALLA TIME-- BE GOOD T' BRING IN SOME NEW BLOOD TO PLAY WITH.
WHO ARE YOU?!
MOMMA, POPPA--
--HELP ME!
YOU GOT THE EDUCATION, PROF, YOU TELL US. WE ARE MANY...
...SO CALL US, LEGION!

BONKERS
LOOK OUT WHEN NEW BONKERS® FRUIT CANDY HITS TOWN!
THIS TOWN'S GOING BONKERS!
SOMETHING FRUITY IS GOING ON AROUND HERE!
BONK!
FRUITY, CHEWY OUTSIDE, SUPER FRUITY INSIDE!
BONK!
I'VE HEARD OF BIG FRUIT TASTE, BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS!
WATCH FOR FALLING BONKERS
NEW! Bonkers! FRUIT CANDY
BONKERVILLE POP: BONKED OUT!
BONK
NEW! Bonkers! FRUIT CANDY
ALL 3 FLAVORS BONK ME OUT!
Bonkers!
BONKS YOU OUT!
NABISCO BRANDS
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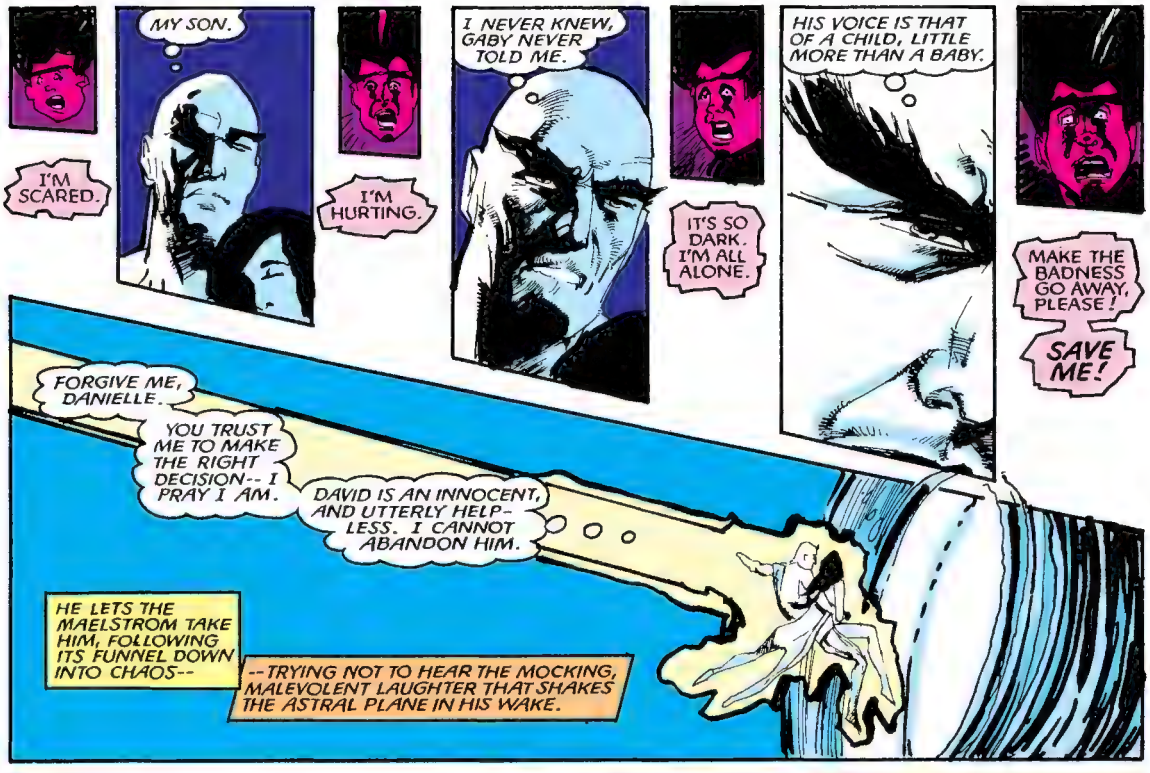
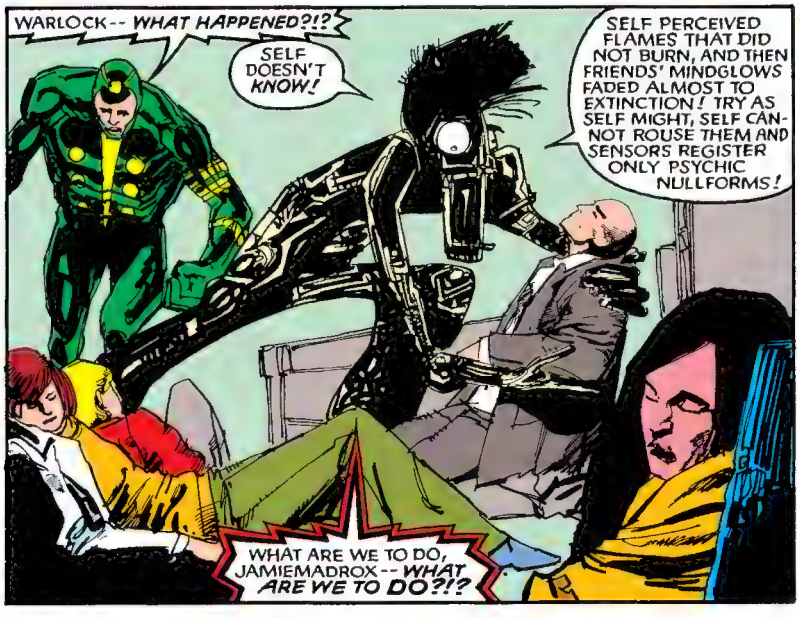
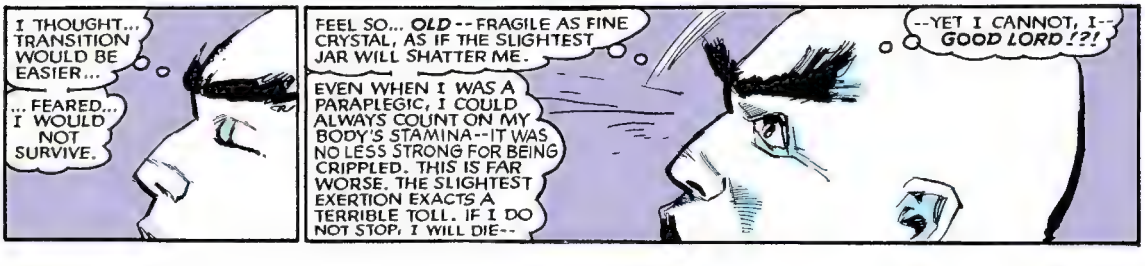

I'M SCARED.
MY SON.
I'M HURTING.
I NEVER KNEW, GABY NEVER TOLD ME.
IT'S SO DARK. I'M ALL ALONE.
HIS VOICE IS THAT OF A CHILD, LITTLE MORE THAN A BABY.
MAKE THE BADNESS GO AWAY, PLEASE!
SAVE ME!
FORGIVE ME, DANIELLE.
YOU TRUST ME TO MAKE THE RIGHT DECISION-- I PRAY I AM.
DAVID IS AN INNOCENT, AND UTTERLY HELPLESS. I CANNOT ABANDON HIM.
HE LETS THE MAELSTROM TAKE HIM, FOLLOWING ITS FUNNEL DOWN INTO CHAOS--
--TRYING NOT TO HEAR THE MOCKING, MALEVOLENT LAUGHTER THAT SHAKES THE ASTRAL PLANE IN HIS WAKE.


WARLOCK-- WHAT HAPPENED?!?
SELF DOESN'T KNOW!
SELF PERCEIVED FLAMES THAT DID NOT BURN, AND THEN FRIENDS' MINDGLOWS FADED ALMOST TO EXTINCTION! TRY AS SELF MIGHT, SELF CANNOT ROUSE THEM AND SENSORS REGISTER ONLY PSYCHIC NULLFORMS!
WHAT ARE WE TO DO, JAMIEMADROX-- WHAT ARE WE TO DO?!?

UNNOTICED IN THE CONFUSION, THE SLEEPER STIRS-- WATCHING WITH GLEEFUL, HATING EYES THAT REVEL IN THE YOUNGSTERS' ANGUISH-- HE SMILES...
... AND THEN SLEEPS ONCE MORE...

... THE BETTER TO PLAY WITH THE NEW TOYS WITHIN HIS MIND.


I THOUGHT... TRANSITION WOULD BE EASIER...
... FEARED... I WOULD NOT SURVIVE.
FEEL SO... OLD -- FRAGILE AS FINE CRYSTAL, AS IF THE SLIGHTEST JAR WILL SHATTER ME.
EVEN WHEN I WAS A PARAPLEGIC, I COULD ALWAYS COUNT ON MY BODY'S STAMINA--IT WAS NO LESS STRONG FOR BEING CRIPPLED. THIS IS FAR WORSE. THE SLIGHTEST EXERTION EXACTS A TERRIBLE TOLL. IF I DO NOT STOP, I WILL DIE--
--YET I CANNOT, I-- GOOD LORD!?!

BEFORE HIM LIES MADNESS--

-- A CHILD'S CRAZY-QUILT SYNTHESIS OF PARIS AND BEIRUT, ONE SET OF IMAGES FROM DAVID'S MEMORIES, THE OTHER, XAVIER PRESUMES, FROM THE YOUNG ARAB'S. SUPERNAL BEAUTY SCARRED BY TOTAL WAR.

EVERYTHING IS LARGER THAN LIFE, AS IT WOULD BE FOR A CHILD, DAVID'S INFLUENCE EXTENDING TO THE WEAPONS AND MACHINES THAT RAVAGE THE MINDSCAPE, MAKING THEM LIVING MONSTROUS AND DAEMONIC AVATARS.

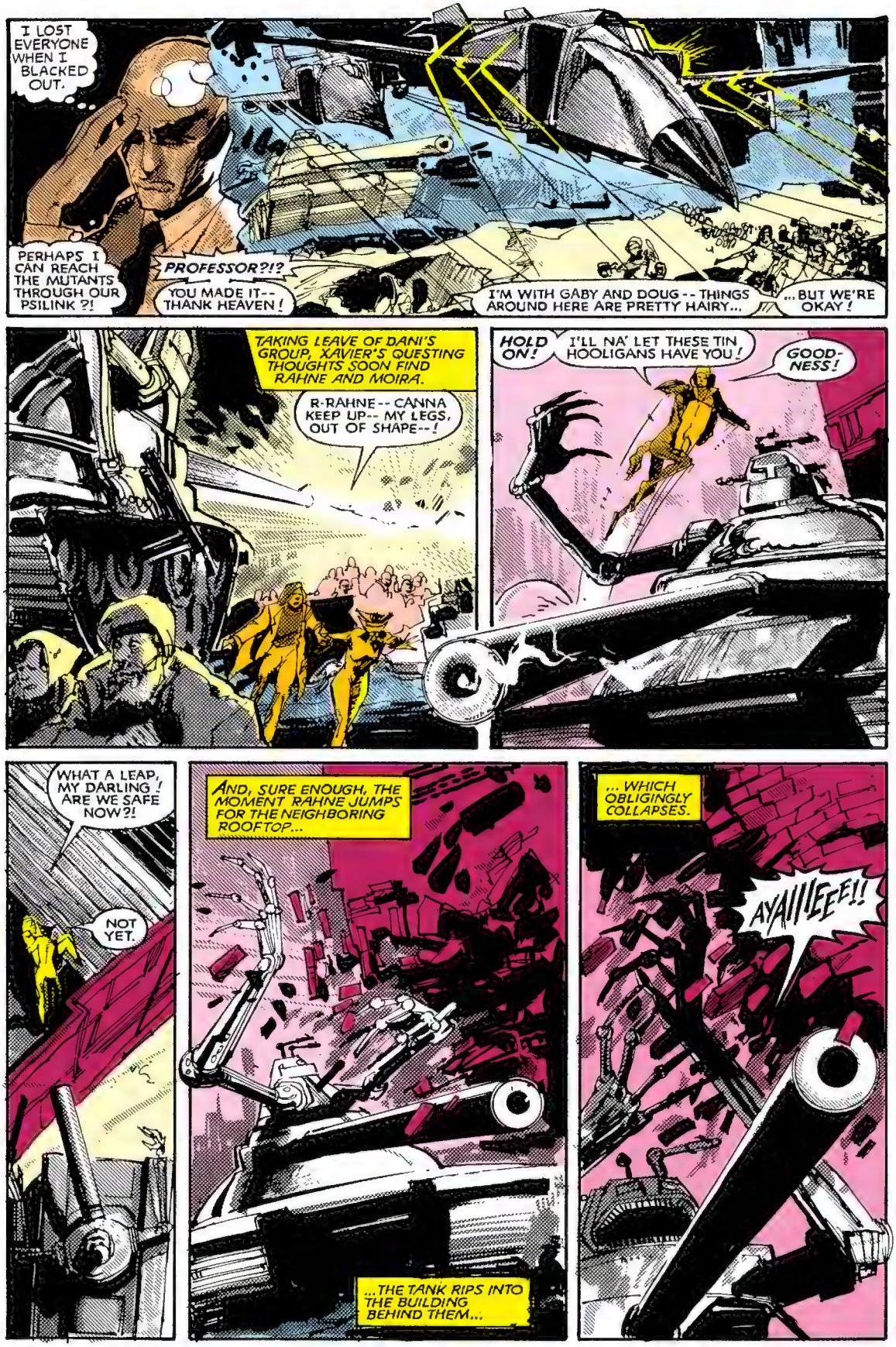
EVERYWHERE THERE ARE SCREAMS-- OF GRIEF AND AGONY, AS PEOPLE SEE THEIR LOVED ONES SLAUGHTERED, OR ARE SLAIN THEMSELVES. THE AIR IS THICK WITH SMOKE AND A STOMACH-TURNING CHARNAL STENCH XAVIER HASN'T SMELLED SINCE HE FOUGHT IN HIS OWN WAR, WHEN HE WAS A YOUNG MAN.

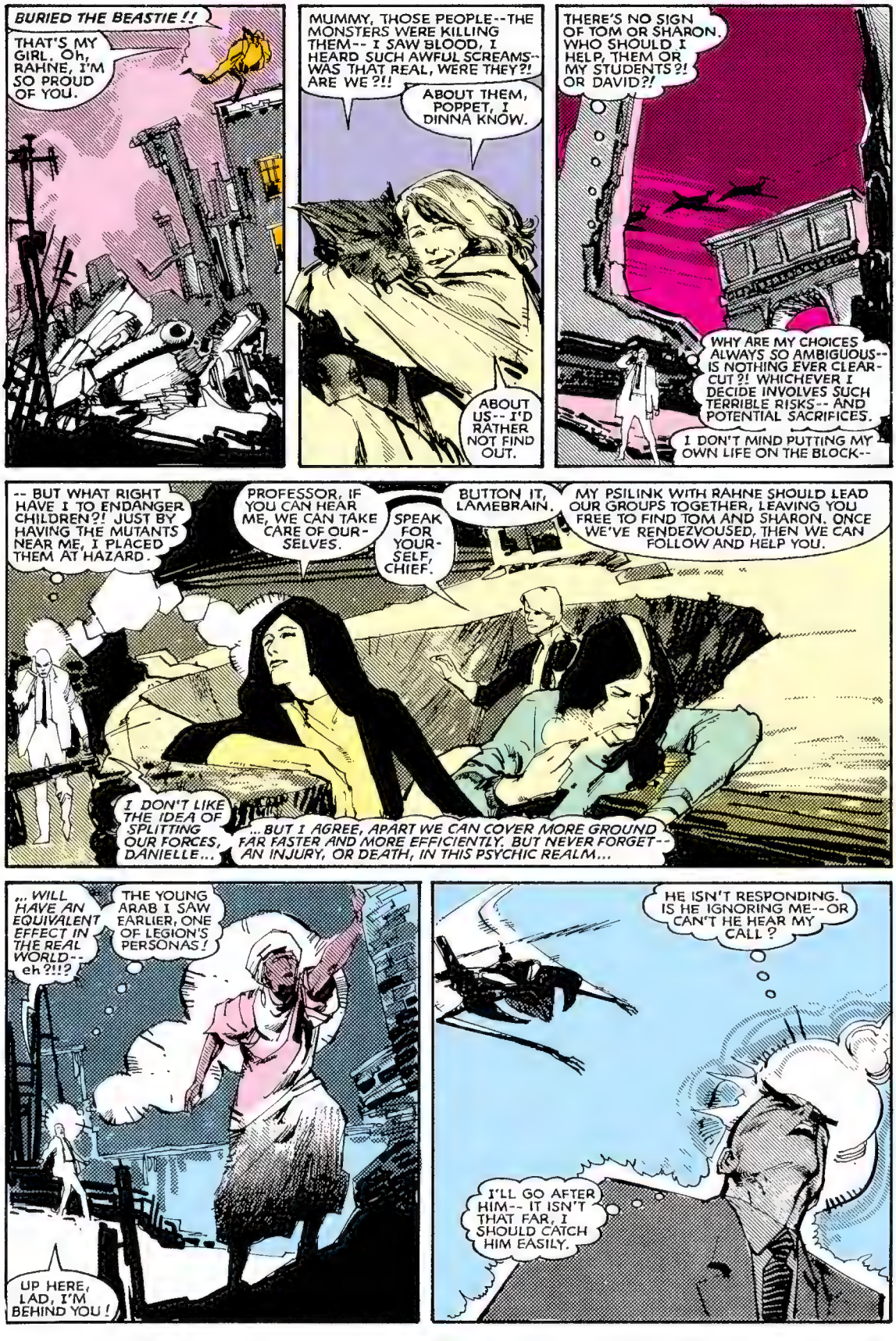
"HOW LONG HAS DAVID BEEN LIKE THIS," *HE WONDERS, UNAWARE OF TEARS STREAMING DOWN HIS CHEEKS,* "SINCE HE WAS ATTACKED?! BUT THAT WAS NEARLY HALF HIS LIFETIME AGO-- HOW CAN ANY CONSCIOUSNESS, ANY SOUL, ENDURE SUCH TORMENT AND REMAIN SANE?!

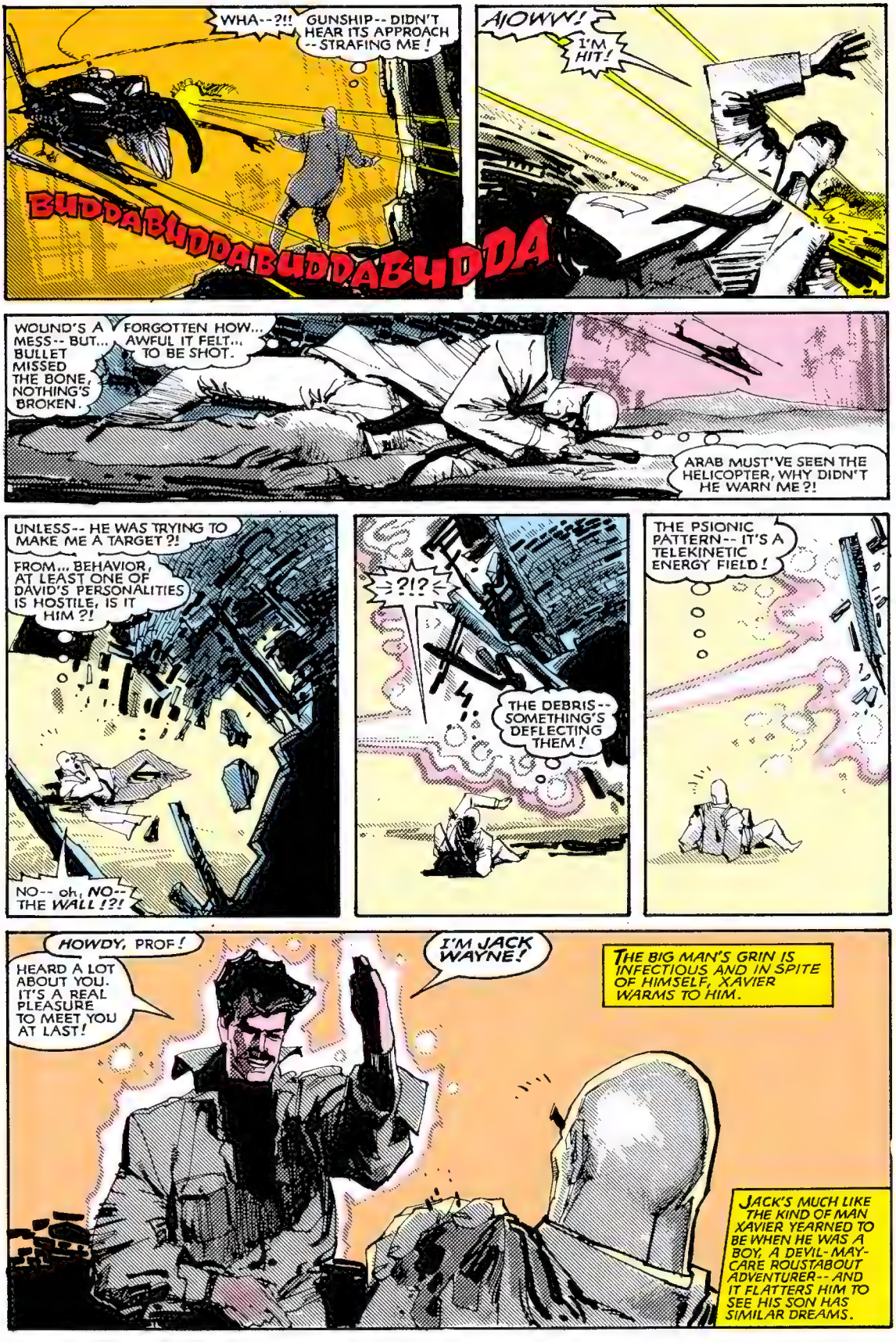
"AND IF INSANE, HOW THEN CAN EVEN I HEAL HIM?!"

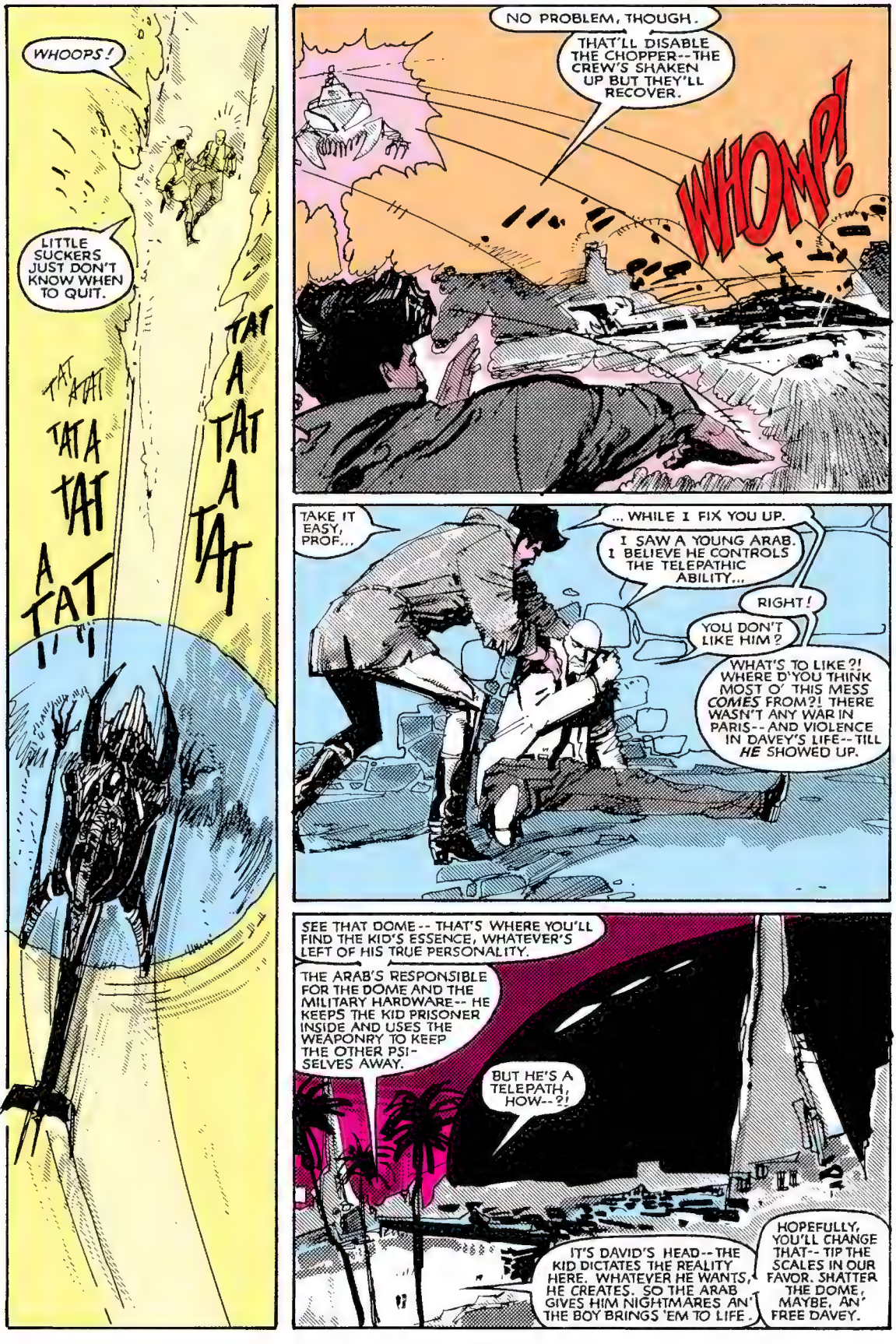
HIS EYES TURN TO A HUGE, DARKLY BROODING DOME THAT DOMINATES THE MADCAP METROPOLIS, AND HE SENSES INSTINCTIVELY THAT IT HOLDS THE ANSWERS HE SEEKS.

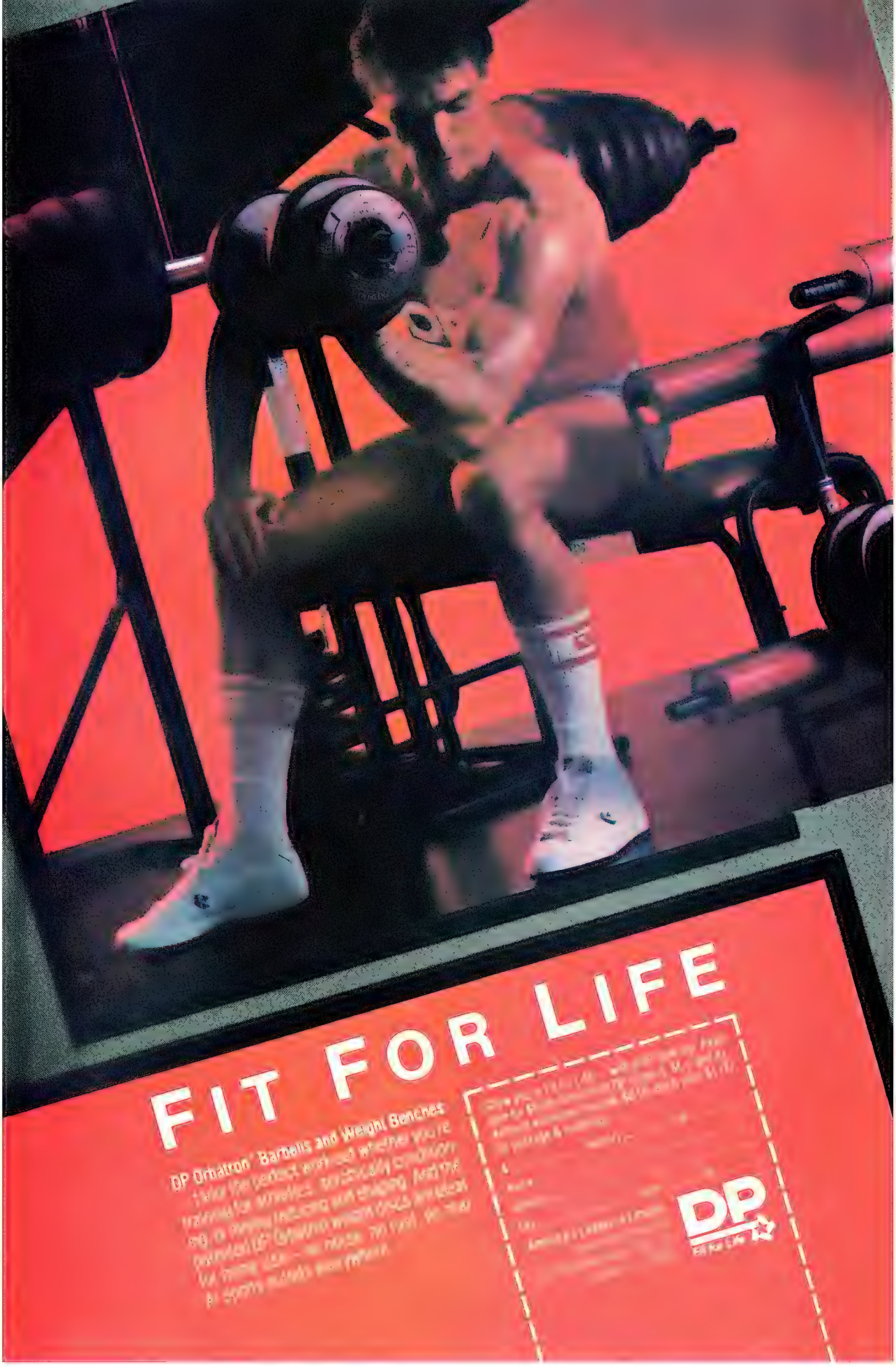
THE TRICK, OF COURSE, WILL BE SURVIVING LONG ENOUGH TO REACH IT.


I LOST EVERYONE WHEN I BLACKED OUT.
PERHAPS I CAN REACH THE MUTANTS THROUGH OUR PSILINK ?!
PROFESSOR?!?
YOU MADE IT-- THANK HEAVEN!
I'M WITH GABY AND DOUG -- THINGS AROUND HERE ARE PRETTY HAIRY...
...BUT WE'RE OKAY!
TAKING LEAVE OF DANI'S GROUP, XAVIER'S QUESTING THOUGHTS SOON FIND RAHNE AND MOIRA.
R-RAHNE-- CANNA KEEP UP-- MY LEGS, OUT OF SHAPE--!
HOLD ON!
I'LL NA' LET THESE TIN HOOLIGANS HAVE YOU!
GOOD-NESS!
WHAT A LEAP, MY DARLING! ARE WE SAFE NOW?!
NOT YET.
AND, SURE ENOUGH, THE MOMENT RAHNE JUMPS FOR THE NEIGHBORING ROOFTOP...
...THE TANK RIPS INTO THE BUILDING BEHIND THEM...
...WHICH OBLIGINGLY COLLAPSES.
AYAIIIEEE!!


BURIED THE BEASTIE !!
THAT'S MY GIRL. Oh, RAHNE, I'M SO PROUD OF YOU.
MUMMY, THOSE PEOPLE--THE MONSTERS WERE KILLING THEM-- I SAW BLOOD, I HEARD SUCH AWFUL SCREAMS-- WAS THAT REAL, WERE THEY?! ARE WE ?!!
ABOUT THEM, POPPET, I DINNA KNOW.
ABOUT US-- I'D RATHER NOT FIND OUT.
THERE'S NO SIGN OF TOM OR SHARON. WHO SHOULD I HELP, THEM OR MY STUDENTS?! OR DAVID?!
WHY ARE MY CHOICES ALWAYS SO AMBIGUOUS-- IS NOTHING EVER CLEAR-CUT?! WHICHEVER I DECIDE INVOLVES SUCH TERRIBLE RISKS-- AND POTENTIAL SACRIFICES.
I DON'T MIND PUTTING MY OWN LIFE ON THE BLOCK--
-- BUT WHAT RIGHT HAVE I TO ENDANGER CHILDREN?! JUST BY HAVING THE MUTANTS NEAR ME, I PLACED THEM AT HAZARD.
PROFESSOR, IF YOU CAN HEAR ME, WE CAN TAKE CARE OF OUR-SELVES.
SPEAK FOR YOUR-SELF, CHIEF.
BUTTON IT, LAMEBRAIN.
MY PSILINK WITH RAHNE SHOULD LEAD OUR GROUPS TOGETHER, LEAVING YOU FREE TO FIND TOM AND SHARON. ONCE WE'VE RENDEZVOUSED, THEN WE CAN FOLLOW AND HELP YOU.
I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF SPLITTING OUR FORCES, DANIELLE...
...BUT I AGREE, APART WE CAN COVER MORE GROUND FAR FASTER AND MORE EFFICIENTLY. BUT NEVER FORGET-- AN INJURY, OR DEATH, IN THIS PSYCHIC REALM...
...WILL HAVE AN EQUIVALENT EFFECT IN THE REAL WORLD-- eh ?!!?
THE YOUNG ARAB I SAW EARLIER, ONE OF LEGION'S PERSONAS!
UP HERE, LAD, I'M BEHIND YOU!
HE ISN'T RESPONDING. IS HE IGNORING ME--OR CAN'T HE HEAR MY CALL ?
I'LL GO AFTER HIM-- IT ISN'T THAT FAR, I SHOULD CATCH HIM EASILY.


WHA--?!!
GUNSHIP-- DIDN'T HEAR ITS APPROACH --STRAFING ME!
BUDDABUDDABUDDABUDDA
AIOWW!
I'M HIT!
WOUND'S A MESS-- BUT... BULLET MISSED THE BONE, NOTHING'S BROKEN.
FORGOTTEN HOW... AWFUL IT FELT... TO BE SHOT.
ARAB MUST'VE SEEN THE HELICOPTER, WHY DIDN'T HE WARN ME?!
UNLESS-- HE WAS TRYING TO MAKE ME A TARGET?!
FROM... BEHAVIOR, AT LEAST ONE OF DAVID'S PERSONALITIES IS HOSTILE, IS IT HIM?!
NO-- oh, NO-- THE WALL!?!
?!?
THE DEBRIS-- SOMETHING'S DEFLECTING THEM!
THE PSIONIC PATTERN-- IT'S A TELEKINETIC ENERGY FIELD!
HOWDY, PROF!
HEARD A LOT ABOUT YOU. IT'S A REAL PLEASURE TO MEET YOU AT LAST!
I'M JACK WAYNE!
THE BIG MAN'S GRIN IS INFECTIOUS AND IN SPITE OF HIMSELF, XAVIER WARMS TO HIM.
JACK'S MUCH LIKE THE KIND OF MAN XAVIER YEARNED TO BE WHEN HE WAS A BOY, A DEVIL-MAY-CARE ROUSTABOUT ADVENTURER-- AND IT FLATTERS HIM TO SEE HIS SON HAS SIMILAR DREAMS.


WHOOPS!
LITTLE SUCKERS JUST DON'T KNOW WHEN TO QUIT.
TAT A TAT A TAT A TAT
TAT A TAT A TAT A TAT
NO PROBLEM, THOUGH.
THAT'LL DISABLE THE CHOPPER--THE CREW'S SHAKEN UP BUT THEY'LL RECOVER.
WHOMP!
TAKE IT EASY, PROF...
... WHILE I FIX YOU UP.
I SAW A YOUNG ARAB. I BELIEVE HE CONTROLS THE TELEPATHIC ABILITY...
RIGHT!
YOU DON'T LIKE HIM?
WHAT'S TO LIKE?! WHERE D'YOU THINK MOST O' THIS MESS COMES FROM?! THERE WASN'T ANY WAR IN PARIS--AND VIOLENCE IN DAVEY'S LIFE--TILL HE SHOWED UP.
SEE THAT DOME-- THAT'S WHERE YOU'LL FIND THE KID'S ESSENCE, WHATEVER'S LEFT OF HIS TRUE PERSONALITY.
THE ARAB'S RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DOME AND THE MILITARY HARDWARE-- HE KEEPS THE KID PRISONER INSIDE AND USES THE WEAPONRY TO KEEP THE OTHER PSI-SELVES AWAY.
BUT HE'S A TELEPATH, HOW--?!
IT'S DAVID'S HEAD--THE KID DICTATES THE REALITY HERE. WHATEVER HE WANTS, HE CREATES. SO THE ARAB GIVES HIM NIGHTMARES AN' THE BOY BRINGS 'EM TO LIFE.
HOPEFULLY, YOU'LL CHANGE THAT-- TIP THE SCALES IN OUR FAVOR. SHATTER THE DOME, MAYBE, AN' FREE DAVEY.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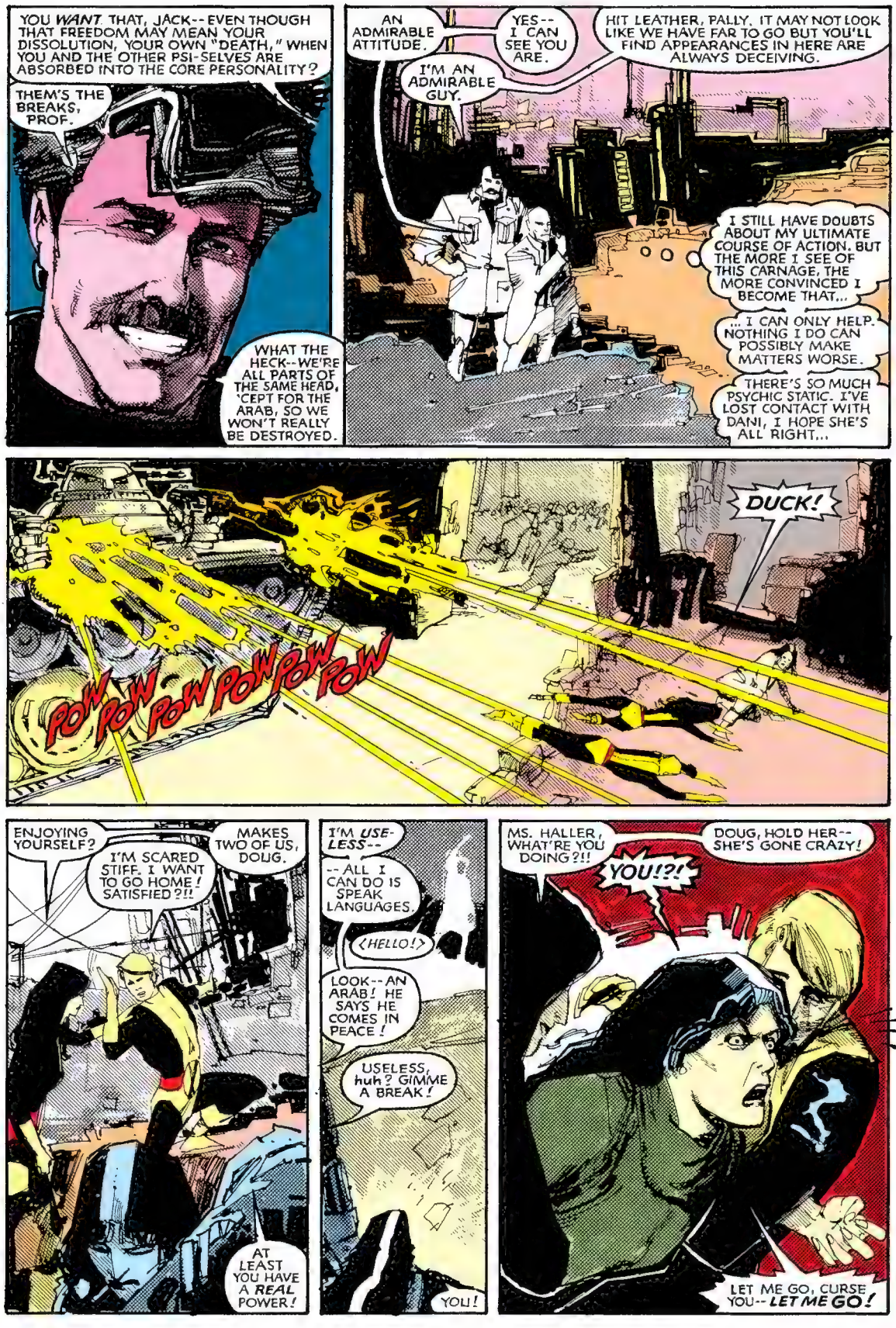
YOU WANT THAT, JACK--EVEN THOUGH THAT FREEDOM MAY MEAN YOUR DISSOLUTION, YOUR OWN "DEATH," WHEN YOU AND THE OTHER PSI-SELVES ARE ABSORBED INTO THE CORE PERSONALITY?
THEM'S THE BREAKS, PROF.
WHAT THE HECK--WE'RE ALL PARTS OF THE SAME HEAD, 'CEPT FOR THE ARAB, SO WE WON'T REALLY BE DESTROYED.
AN ADMIRABLE ATTITUDE.
YES--I CAN SEE YOU ARE.
I'M AN ADMIRABLE GUY.
HIT LEATHER, PALLY. IT MAY NOT LOOK LIKE WE HAVE FAR TO GO BUT YOU'LL FIND APPEARANCES IN HERE ARE ALWAYS DECEIVING.
I STILL HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT MY ULTIMATE COURSE OF ACTION. BUT THE MORE I SEE OF THIS CARNAGE, THE MORE CONVINCED I BECOME THAT...
... I CAN ONLY HELP. NOTHING I DO CAN POSSIBLY MAKE MATTERS WORSE.
THERE'S SO MUCH PSYCHIC STATIC. I'VE LOST CONTACT WITH DANI, I HOPE SHE'S ALL RIGHT...
DUCK!
POW POW POW POW POW POW
ENJOYING YOURSELF?
I'M SCARED STIFF. I WANT TO GO HOME! SATISFIED?!!
MAKES TWO OF US, DOUG.
AT LEAST YOU HAVE A REAL POWER!
I'M USELESS--
--ALL I CAN DO IS SPEAK LANGUAGES.
(HELLO!)
LOOK--AN ARAB! HE SAYS HE COMES IN PEACE!
USELESS, huh? GIMME A BREAK!
YOU!
MS. HALLER, WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!!
YOU!?!
DOUG, HOLD HER--SHE'S GONE CRAZY!
LET ME GO, CURSE YOU--LET ME GO!

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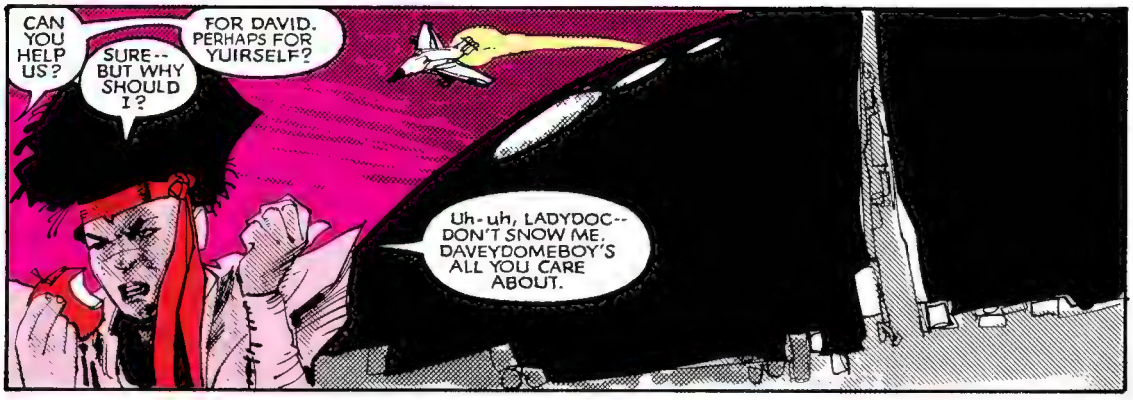
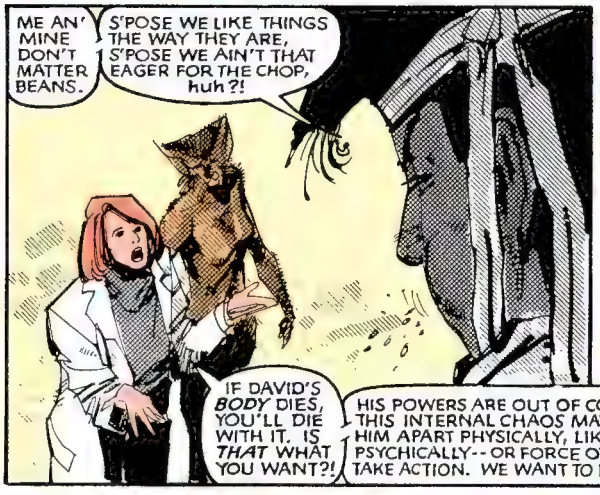
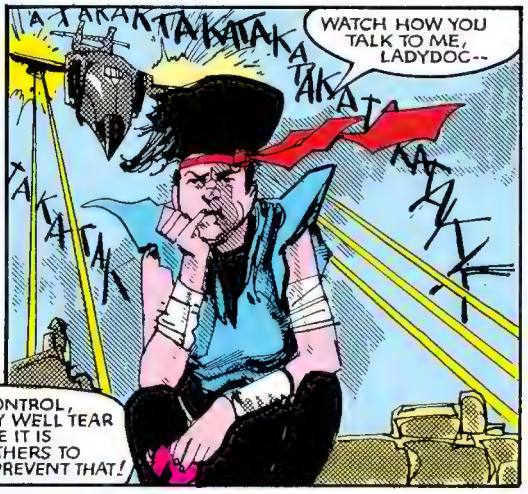
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND!
THAT'S A TERRORIST!
HE MURDERED MY DEAREST FRIEND-- DAVID'S GODFATHER-- HE TRIED TO KILL DAVID HIMSELF!!
TANK!
FORGET THE ARAB-- IT'S OUR OWN LIVES WE'VE GOT TO LOOK OUT FOR!
FIND COVER-- SCATTER!
ELSEWHERE...
DANI AN' THE OTHERS-- THEY'RE BEING CHASED, AS WE ARE!
IF ONLY THERE WERE SOMETHING WE COULD DO TO FIGHT THESE DEMON-CRAFT, AN' SAVE THESE POOR PEOPLE!
MADNESS-- MADNESS-- THE PARENTS SHOVE THEIR CHILDREN INTO THE LINE OF FIRE, USING THEIR BODIES AS SHIELDS...
... YET IT'S THE PARENTS WHO'RE ALWAYS KILLED.
THEY SAY THEY LOVE YOU--
-- BUT WHEN IT'S YOUR LIFE OR THEIRS, THEY'LL DUMP YOU EVERY TIME.
Y'ASK ME, THE SCUM GET WHAT THEY DESERVE.
WHO ARE YOU?!
CYNDI!


CAN YOU HELP US?
SURE--BUT WHY SHOULD I?
FOR DAVID. PERHAPS FOR YUIRSELF?
Uh-uh, LADYDOC--DON'T SNOW ME. DAVEYDOMEBOY'S ALL YOU CARE ABOUT.

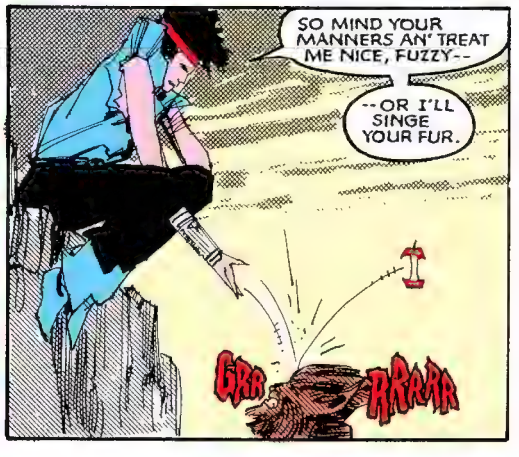

ME AN' MINE DON'T MATTER BEANS.
S'POSE WE LIKE THINGS THE WAY THEY ARE, S'POSE WE AIN'T THAT EAGER FOR THE CHOP, huh?!
IF DAVID'S *BODY* DIES, YOU'LL DIE WITH IT. IS *THAT* WHAT YOU WANT?!
HIS POWERS ARE OUT OF CONTROL, THIS INTERNAL CHAOS MAY WELL TEAR HIM APART PHYSICALLY, LIKE IT IS PSYCHICALLY--OR FORCE OTHERS TO TAKE ACTION. WE WANT TO PREVENT THAT!


WATCH HOW YOU TALK TO ME, LADYDOC--

--*I'M* ONE OF THOSE POWERS.
SNAP
BOOM!

THE *PYROTIC!*
SHE'S THE SPALPEEN WHO BLEW UP YUIR LAB--?!

YUP.


SO MIND YOUR MANNERS AN' TREAT ME NICE, FUZZY--
--OR I'LL SINGE YOUR FUR.
GRR
RRRRR

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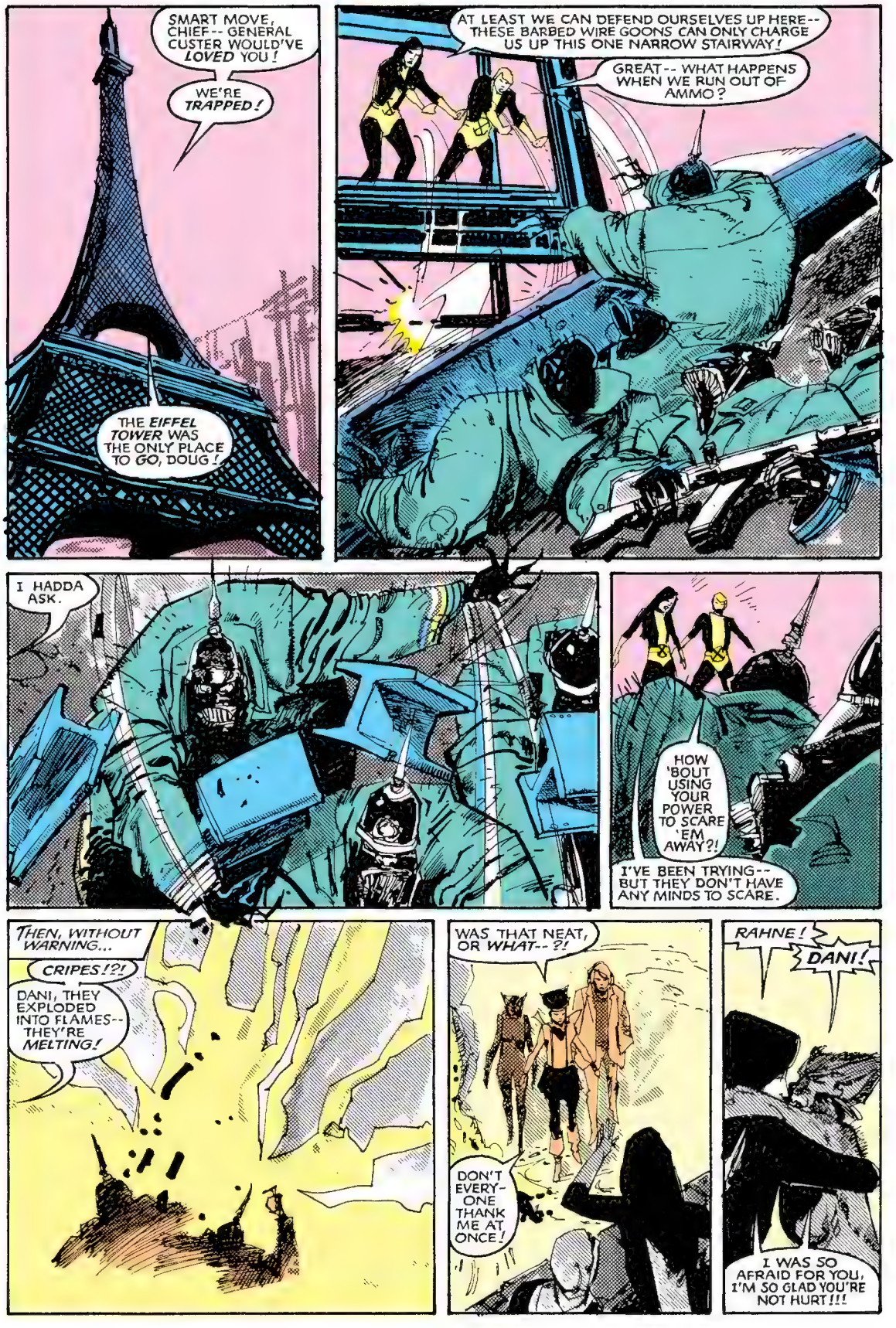
SMART MOVE, CHIEF-- GENERAL CUSTER WOULD'VE *LOVED* YOU!
WE'RE *TRAPPED!*
THE *EIFFEL TOWER* WAS THE ONLY PLACE TO *GO*, DOUG!
AT LEAST WE CAN DEFEND OURSELVES UP HERE-- THESE BARBED WIRE GOONS CAN ONLY CHARGE US UP THIS ONE NARROW STAIRWAY!
GREAT-- WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE RUN OUT OF AMMO?
I HADDA ASK.
HOW 'BOUT USING YOUR POWER TO SCARE 'EM AWAY?!
I'VE BEEN TRYING-- BUT THEY DON'T HAVE ANY MINDS TO SCARE.
THEN, WITHOUT WARNING...
CRIPES!?!
DANI, THEY EXPLODED INTO FLAMES-- THEY'RE *MELTING!*
WAS THAT NEAT, OR *WHAT*--?!
DON'T EVERY-ONE THANK ME AT ONCE!
RAHNE!
DANI!
I WAS SO AFRAID FOR YOU, I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE NOT HURT!!!

Bullpen Bulletins

DEEP IN THE HEART OF TEXAS . . .

I attended the Dallas Fantasy Fair last weekend, November 23-25, 1984, where as Editor in Chief, I autographed hundreds of Marvel Comics, and, as scripter of *Marvel Super Heroes Secret Wars*, I autographed *thousands* of copies of that particular limited series, which, he added modestly, is the most successful, best-selling comics series of the last few decades.

Texas is great. Seldom I heard a discouraging word, and skies were not cloudy all day!

SPEAKING OF TEXAS FANS . . .

There's a Marvel fan club down there called YHAPA made up of enthusiastic young collectors. I hear they're a great bunch. If you're interested in information, write:

YHAPA
641 Tiffany Drive
Richardson, Texas
75081

I don't usually do plugs for fan clubs in this column because I get so many requests, but *that's* how impressed I was with the crew down there. You should have seen their reaction when I announced that we were doing a *sequel* to *Secret Wars* (starting in April). Wow.

AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR SUBSCRIPTION DEPARTMENT . . .

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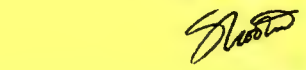
THAT'S ALL FOR NOW . . .

But check here next month for an important announcement regarding an awards balloting where you have a chance to vote for your favorites!

Hang in there!



Jim Shooter

HYPE BOX

STAR COMICS — Marvel's new line of Star Comics does it again for the second month in a row! Joining Planet Terry and Wally the Wizard are Royal Roy, the Muppet Babies, the Getalong Gang, and, direct from the "Star Wars" saga, the Ewoks! You won't want to miss any of their exciting, fun-filled, *all-new first issues!* And there's more — the surprise sensation of last year's MARVEL TAILS is now appearing in a whole series of brand-new adventures! That's right, because you demanded it, Peter Porker, the Spectacular Spider-Ham swings into action again! Star Comics — there's a galaxy of fun in every issue!

CLOAK AND DAGGER #1 — They've guest-starred in several Marvel comics, they've had their own Limited Series, and you still want more! Well, thanks to BILL MANTLO, RICK LEONARDI, and TERRY AUSTIN, you're getting more! Cloak and Dagger will be coming at you every other month in their own regular comics series! Join the Creature of Light and the Demon of Darkness as they team up to protect the children of New York from the forces of evil! It's action the way you like it!

ROCKET RACCOON #1 — He is a mammal of many missions in a galaxy that never lets him catch his breath. He must prevent total war, save his true love, and escape the looney bin that is his universe! And that's just for starters! Find out what's been happening to the furry fury since his guest appearance in THE INCREDIBLE HULK — you won't believe your eyes! But you can believe that BILL MANTLO, MIKE MIGNOLA and AL GORDON have created four fast-paced issues that will knock your paws off!

MOONSHADOW #1 — J.M. DeMATTEIS (writer) and JON J MUTH (artist) have collaborated on a story which is uniquely suited for the EPIC COMICS line. This beautifully painted fairy tale for the 1980's will be especially appreciated by adults who remember the 1960's. Why? Because this first issue relates the tale of how Sunflower, a 1960's flower child, was kidnapped by aliens and bore a child. His name is Moonshadow, and this is his story. Reserve your copy *now* at your local comics shop — you'll be glad you did!

CHECK LIST

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST

- ☐ **THE THING #23** — The Thing is back on Earth, but he's not back with the FF! Featuring special guest inker BOB LAYTON!
- ☐ **DAREDEVIL #218**
- ☐ **NEW MUTANTS #27**
- ☐ **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #2**
- ☐ **RED SONJA #9**
- ☐ **CONAN THE KING #28** — Featuring . . . Red Sonja!
- ☐ **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #264**
- ☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #305** — From across the Atlantic Ocean, it's Captain Britain!
- ☐ **POWER PACK #10** — Guest-starring Marrina from *Alpha Flight!*
- ☐ **MICRONAUTS #8**
- ☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT #22**
- ☐ **INDIANA JONES #29**
- ☐ **DAZZLER #37**
- ☐ **DUNE (Limited Series) #2**
- ☐ **INCREDIBLE HULK #307**
- ☐ **AVENGERS #255** — Introducing the new regular art team of JOHN BUSCEMA and TOM PALMER!
- ☐ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN #170**
- ☐ **MARVEL TALES #175** — Reprinting "When Falls the Meteor," by STAN LEE and STEVE DITKO, from *Amazing Spider-Man #36.*
- ☐ **ROM #66** — Rom leaves Earth! What will happen now? A MANTLO / DITKO/LEIALOHA production!
- ☐ **POWER MAN / IRON FIST #117**
- ☐ **G.I. JOE #35**
- ☐ **X-MEN #193** — A *double-size* special celebrating the first 100 issues of the *new* X-Men!
- ☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR #278** — Dr. Doom is *back!*
- ☐ **IRON MAN #184**
- ☐ **PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #102**
- ☐ **DEFENDERS #143**
- ☐ **STAR WARS #95**
- ☐ **THOR #355**
- ☐ **CLOAK AND DAGGER #1** — Now in their own regular series at last! See Hype Box!
- ☐ **ROCKET RACCOON (Limited Series) #1** — Blast off to adventure with the most daring raccoon in the galaxy! See Hype Box!
- ☐ **2010 (Limited Series) #2**
- ☐ **THE OFFICIAL MARVEL INDEX TO THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #2** — Featuring everything you wanted to know about what happened in *Amazing Spider-Man #30-59!*
- ☐ **DOCTOR WHO #8**

MARVEL MAGAZINES

- ☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #111**
- ☐ **MARVEL AGE #29**
- ☐ **MARVEL FANFARE #20** — The Thing and The Hulk face off in "The Clash, Part II" Story and pencils by STARLIN, inks by MILGROM!

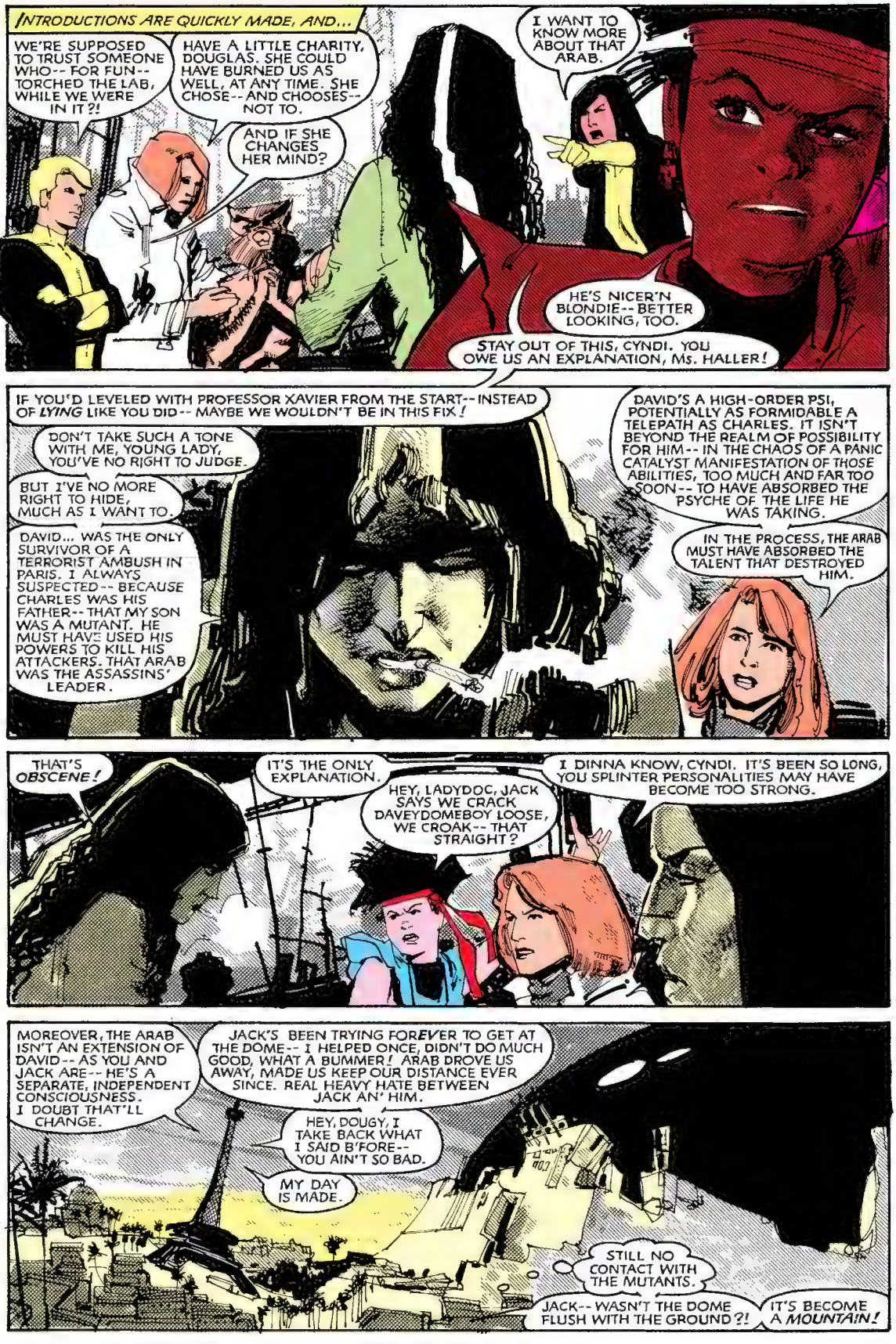
EPIC COMICS

- ☐ **EPIC ILLUSTRATED #29**
- ☐ **MOONSHADOW #1** — A comic like you've never seen before! See Hype Box.
- ☐ **VOID INDIGO #2**
- ☐ **GROO THE WANDERER #3**
- ☐ **COYOTE #11**
- ☐ **SWORDS OF THE SWASHBUCKLERS #1** — The Swashbucklers have been polishing their swords, making sure that this will be the best epic ever! Don't miss it!

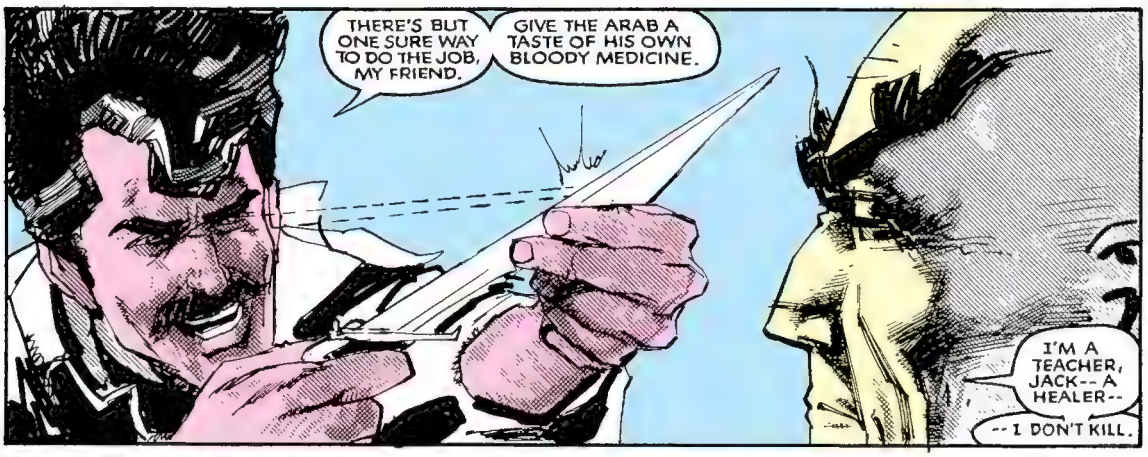
STAR COMICS

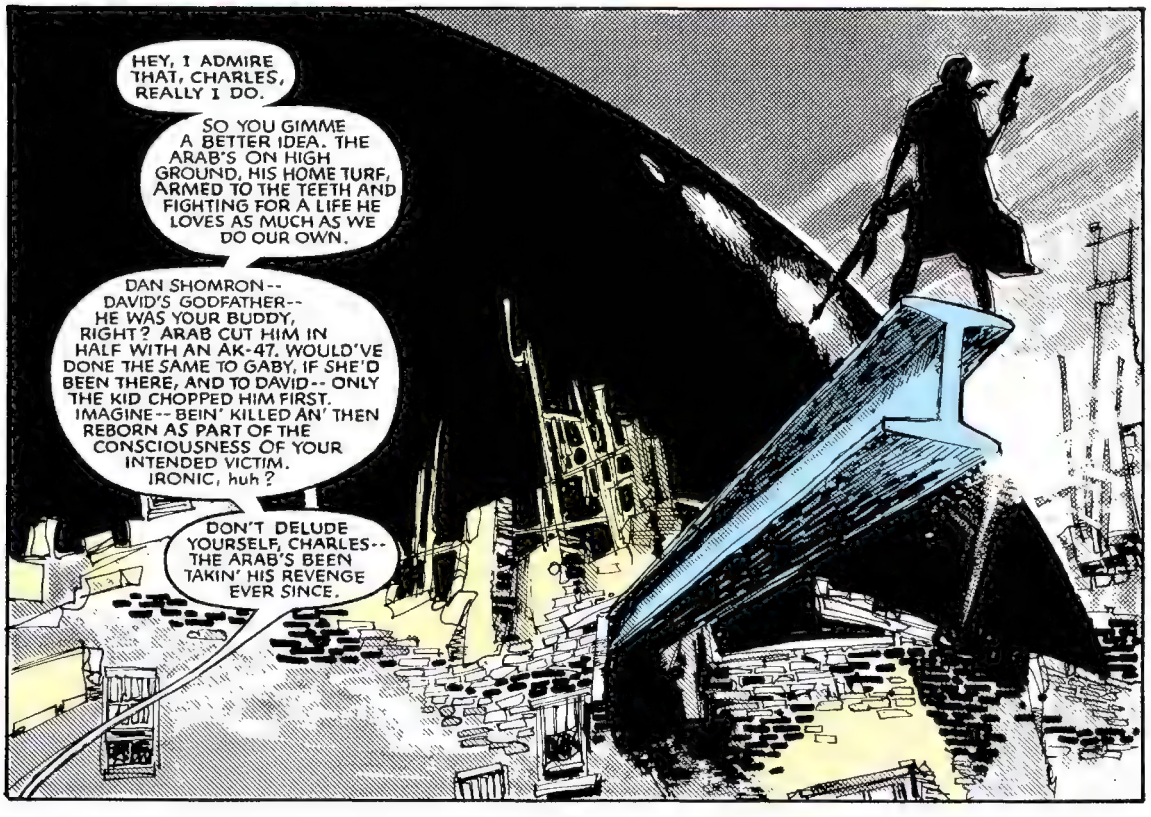
(See Hype Box!)

- ☐ **PLANET TERRY #2**
- ☐ **PETER PORKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM #1** — Now in his own title because *you demanded it!* This issue, Spider-Ham visits "The Mysterious Island of Ducktor Doom!"
- ☐ **WALLY THE WIZARD #2**
- ☐ **ROYAL ROY #1** — He's a prince of a boy! And he's learning how to rule the very tiny (and very rich) kingdom of Cashelot! If that sounds like fun, it is!
- ☐ **MUPPET BABIES #1** — Can you imagine Kermit the Frog and Miss Piggy wearing *diapers?!* See that and more in their fun-filled first issue!
- ☐ **GETALONG GANG #1** — The stars of Saturday morning TV are now starring in their own Star Comic! Montgomery Moose, Zipper Cat and Dotty Dog want *you* to join the Getalong Gang, too!


INTRODUCTIONS ARE QUICKLY MADE, AND...
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO TRUST SOMEONE WHO-- FOR FUN-- TORCHED THE LAB, WHILE WE WERE IN IT?!
HAVE A LITTLE CHARITY, DOUGLAS. SHE COULD HAVE BURNED US AS WELL, AT ANY TIME. SHE CHOSE-- AND CHOOSES-- NOT TO.
AND IF SHE CHANGES HER MIND?
I WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THAT ARAB.
HE'S NICER'N BLONDIE-- BETTER LOOKING, TOO.
STAY OUT OF THIS, CYNDI. YOU OWE US AN EXPLANATION, Ms. HALLER!
IF YOU'D LEVELED WITH PROFESSOR XAVIER FROM THE START-- INSTEAD OF LYING LIKE YOU DID-- MAYBE WE WOULDN'T BE IN THIS FIX!
DON'T TAKE SUCH A TONE WITH ME, YOUNG LADY, YOU'VE NO RIGHT TO JUDGE.
BUT I'VE NO MORE RIGHT TO HIDE, MUCH AS I WANT TO.
DAVID... WAS THE ONLY SURVIVOR OF A TERRORIST AMBUSH IN PARIS. I ALWAYS SUSPECTED-- BECAUSE CHARLES WAS HIS FATHER-- THAT MY SON WAS A MUTANT. HE MUST HAVE USED HIS POWERS TO KILL HIS ATTACKERS. THAT ARAB WAS THE ASSASSINS' LEADER.
DAVID'S A HIGH-ORDER PSI, POTENTIALLY AS FORMIDABLE A TELEPATH AS CHARLES. IT ISN'T BEYOND THE REALM OF POSSIBILITY FOR HIM-- IN THE CHAOS OF A PANIC CATALYST MANIFESTATION OF THOSE ABILITIES, TOO MUCH AND FAR TOO SOON-- TO HAVE ABSORBED THE PSYCHE OF THE LIFE HE WAS TAKING.
IN THE PROCESS, THE ARAB MUST HAVE ABSORBED THE TALENT THAT DESTROYED HIM.
THAT'S OBSCENE!
IT'S THE ONLY EXPLANATION.
HEY, LADYDOC, JACK SAYS WE CRACK DAVEYDOMEBOY LOOSE, WE CROAK-- THAT STRAIGHT?
I DINNA KNOW, CYNDI. IT'S BEEN SO LONG, YOU SPLINTER PERSONALITIES MAY HAVE BECOME TOO STRONG.
MOREOVER, THE ARAB ISN'T AN EXTENSION OF DAVID-- AS YOU AND JACK ARE-- HE'S A SEPARATE, INDEPENDENT CONSCIOUSNESS. I DOUBT THAT'LL CHANGE.
JACK'S BEEN TRYING FOREVER TO GET AT THE DOME-- I HELPED ONCE, DIDN'T DO MUCH GOOD, WHAT A BUMMER! ARAB DROVE US AWAY, MADE US KEEP OUR DISTANCE EVER SINCE. REAL HEAVY HATE BETWEEN JACK AN' HIM.
HEY, DOUGY, I TAKE BACK WHAT I SAID B'FORE-- YOU AIN'T SO BAD.
MY DAY IS MADE.
STILL NO CONTACT WITH THE MUTANTS.
JACK-- WASN'T THE DOME FLUSH WITH THE GROUND?!
IT'S BECOME A MOUNTAIN!

TOLD YOU THIS WAS GONNA BE HARD. THAT BABY-FACED BUTCHER'S GOT ALMOST AS MANY TRICKS UP HIS SLEEVE AS I DO.
BET ON THIS, THOUGH-- BAD AS THINGS SEEM NOW, IN THE MORNING THEY'LL BE WORSE.
WONDERFUL.
YOU OKAY, CHARLES? YOU'VE SOUNDED BETTER.
I'LL SURVIVE, JACK, THANK YOU.
I HOPE. WHATEVER AFFECTS MY PSYCHIC FORM AFFECTS MY PHYSICAL BODY-- PAIN OR INJURY HERE HAS AN EQUIVALENT ANALOGUE THERE-- BUT THE REVERSE ALSO HOLDS TRUE.
I CAN MUSTER ONLY A FRACTION OF MY NORMAL STRENGTH-- AND THAT REQUIRES EXTRAORDINARY EFFORT. IT'S A VICIOUS, SELF-DESTRUCTIVE CYCLE. THE MORE EFFORT I MAKE, THE WEAKER I BECOME; I'M FORCED TO TRY HARDER, WHICH MAKES ME WEAKER STILL.
ONLY VICTORY-- OR DEFEAT-- WILL BREAK THE PATTERN. ONE WILL SAVE MY SON, BUT BOTH MIGHT COST MY LIFE.


THERE'S BUT ONE SURE WAY TO DO THE JOB, MY FRIEND.
GIVE THE ARAB A TASTE OF HIS OWN BLOODY MEDICINE.
I'M A TEACHER, JACK-- A HEALER--
--I DON'T KILL.


HEY, I ADMIRE THAT, CHARLES, REALLY I DO.
SO YOU GIMME A BETTER IDEA. THE ARAB'S ON HIGH GROUND, HIS HOME TURF, ARMED TO THE TEETH AND FIGHTING FOR A LIFE HE LOVES AS MUCH AS WE DO OUR OWN.
DAN SHOMRON-- DAVID'S GODFATHER-- HE WAS YOUR BUDDY, RIGHT? ARAB CUT HIM IN HALF WITH AN AK-47. WOULD'VE DONE THE SAME TO GABY, IF SHE'D BEEN THERE, AND TO DAVID-- ONLY THE KID CHOPPED HIM FIRST. IMAGINE-- BEIN' KILLED AN' THEN REBORN AS PART OF THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF YOUR INTENDED VICTIM. IRONIC, huh?
DON'T DELUDE YOURSELF, CHARLES-- THE ARAB'S BEEN TAKIN' HIS REVENGE EVER SINCE.

NORMALLY, I'D BET YOU DON'T HAVE THE LUXURY OF CHOOSING BETWEEN ABSOLUTE RIGHT AND WRONG--YOU GO FOR THE GREATER GOOD, THE LESSER EVIL, AM I RIGHT?
YOUR WORLD'S GREY AND AMBIGUOUS, DEALING MOSTLY IN MAYBES, MIGHT-HAVE-BEEN'S, WHAT-IF'S, HALF-TRUTHS-- BECAUSE EVERYTHING YOU SEE AND DO IS IN AND OF THE MIND!
THIS IS DIFFERENT.
YOUR BOY'S IN PAIN AND IN PRISON-- NOT LIKE HIS MOM WAS, THIS WASN'T HIS CHOICE, THE NIGHTMARE WAS FORCED ON HIM.
THE ARAB FORCED HIS WAY IN HERE AND TOOK OVER AND IT'S BEEN A NIGHTMARE EVER SINCE.
YOU CAN END THAT.
IF YOU'VE GOT THE GUTS, IF YOU REALLY CARE.
LET'S GO.
NEXT: THE CONCLUSION:
SOULWAR

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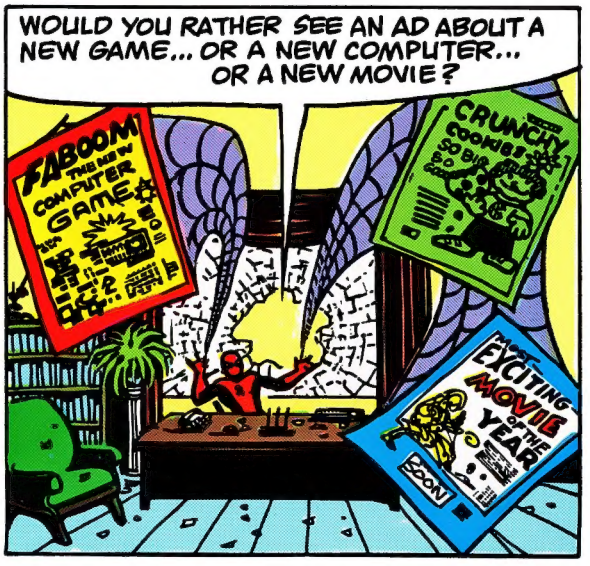
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He's a gonna be OKAY!

I think...